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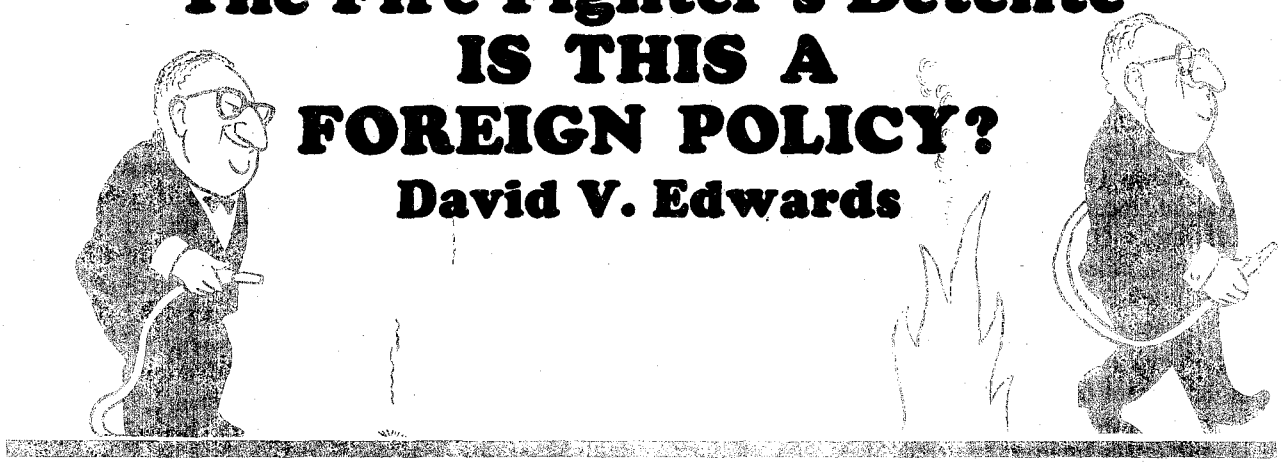
THE NATION

MARCH 8, 1975 50 cents

The Fire-Fighter's Detente

IS THIS A FOREIGN POLICY?

David V. Edwards



Casing the Democrats V

LLOYD BENTSEN: MONEY MAN FROM TEXAS

JOSEPH C. GOULDEN

PARTY SPLITS IN BRITAIN

Recession, EEC

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EDITORIALS

'The Important Thing'

If evidence were needed to sustain the proposition that criminal justice is the process by which in this country we attempt to discipline the lower-income groups—blacks, Chicanos, poor whites, and the so-called "criminal class"—it has been provided by the sentences meted out in the Watergate cases. With the exception of Gordon Liddy, the true believer, most of the defendants have received notably light sentences, considering the gravity of the offenses charged. The sentences given Mitchell, Haldeman, Ehrlichman and Mardian fall in this category. Moreover there is excellent reason to believe that none of these men will actually serve out the terms which Judge Sirica imposed. If their sentences are not later commuted, it is likely that President Ford will pardon them before leaving office. Even as they were being sentenced, former Special Prosecutor Leon Jaworski voiced what constituted a plea for future leniency. "The length of time," he said, "is not the important thing. Rehabilitation is." What would be really important would be a demonstration that ours is a system of equal justice under law; that high government officials and corporate executives who commit major crimes should be treated more sternly in sentencing than, say, an illiterate who has lacked opportunities to make anything of his life. This demonstration has been lacking in the Watergate cases. Indeed some of those found guilty have turned out to be "culture heroes" or "celebrity freaks," in great demand at high fees as lecturers on college campuses and the recipients of prodigious advances on what, to date, have proven to be worthless books. Their income levels have risen and, accordingly, they enjoy higher social status than when they violated their oaths as lawyers and officials and actively participated in the collective crime of Watergate.

The notion advanced by Mr. Jaworski that " rehabilitation" is the important thing in these cases is utter rubbish. Their experiences have no more "rehabilitated" Mitchell, Haldeman and Ehrlichman than Richard M. Nixon has been rehabilitated by his flight from office. To Mr. Nixon, Jaworski addressed an absurd plea, at the time of the sentencing of the chief defendants in Washington, to engage in some "soul-searching" and tell us the truth. But the man to whom this plea was addressed was being honored at a dinner given at the Walter Annenberg estate at Palm Desert, Calif.—with Sinatra there to croon and Bob Hope to wisecrack and Ronald Reagan to console and flatter—even as his former chief aides were being sentenced in Washington. The timing should have been embarrassing but obviously it did not disturb Nixon. In the end, even Haldeman turned against his former boss. "Whatever Bob Haldeman did," his counsel stated to the court, "so did Richard Nixon." And now Frank DeMarco, Jr., Nixon's tax counsel, has been indicted for conspiring to assist Nixon to take an illegal tax deduction of $576,000. Asked by Kenneth Reich of the *Los Angeles Times* if he had heard from Nixon since the tax case erupted in 1973, DeMarco was interrupted by the senior partner of his firm who replied: "Hearing from Nixon would be kind of like getting a phone call from a girl who's given you a dose of clap."

Long jail terms are for the poor; for the well-placed, those with connections, those who once had power and may well have it again, the leniency of the sentence correlates, in our system, with the measure of responsibility. The highest officials—Agnew and Nixon—with the gravest responsibilities, are given special dispensations. But there is a catch: for appearance's sake the highly placed culprit must express "penance." He should say: "I'm sorry; it won't happen again." Penance is essential because it creates the illusion that the criminal code has been equally enforced. Back in November, federal Judge Charles B. Renfrew in San Francisco, in imposing fines which aggregated $272,500 on eight executives in an antitrust prosecution, added a stipulation that the defendants must each make at least a dozen speeches detailing the lessons he had learned from the experience. More recently, a federal judge in Nevada, in accepting pleas in an antitrust case involving officials of Borden Dairy and Carnation Milk, added to the fines a stipulation that the defendants must work for certain designated periods with various "good and welfare" organizations in the community by way of demonstrating their penitence for having offended against the body politic by rigging the price of milk.

Ehrlichman, advised by a new attorney, saw the light and asked that he be sentenced to serve out his term as legal adviser to the Navajos on their reservations. If the suggestion had been advanced a bit earlier, with a boost from the media, it might have won acceptance, for it is in the post-Watergate spirit and also in keeping with the prevailing ethic, in the sense that we do not jail those who have attended a university, who are white and socially presentable, and who are devoted to *laissez-faire* economics and have prospered under "the American system." In theory, what is the connection between fixing prices and doing chores for the Salvation Army? What is rehabilitative in such an arrangement? Or what is the connection in rehabilitation theory, between fixing prices and making a dozen speeches before civic organizations? Any of the eight executives sentenced by Judge Renfrew could meet his specifications by saying: "The lesson I have learned is that no corporate executive ever goes to jail for violating the antitrust laws."

And on a related theme, the Charleston *Gazette* reminds us that L. Patrick Gray, former head of the FBI, is quietly practicing law at his old firm of Suisman, Shapiro, Wool and Brennan in New London, Conn. No bar association has cited him for improper conduct nor has the Special Prosecutor charged him with any offense. Yet Gray, a lawyer, disposed of forged documents which had been removed from Howard Hunt's White House safe. At the time when Gray burned these documents, along with holiday wrappings, in the fireplace of his home he was the second highest ranking law-enforcement official in the federal hierarchy. Gray's case may be less infuriating than Nixon's immunity, but shouldn't the Special Prosecutor's office and the local bar association in New London offer some explanation for their failure even to admonish him?

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Kissinger's War

Henry Kissinger may yet have his Dien Bien Phu. The pattern is the same as it has been for more than twenty years; only the location is different. Just as first French and then American Governments wasted lives and treasure while razing most of a nation in Vietnam, refusing to relent, so Kissinger and his supporters in the White House are intent on destroying lives, property and American funds in Cambodia. If anything, the destruction of Cambodia is more irrational. The toll on the Cambodians is certainly higher, if such things can be measured. That American soldiers are not dying only makes continued intervention the more grotesque.

That America has no foreign policy, not even a coherent cold-war strategy, is a thesis stated and defended by David Edwards in this issue (p. 263). The truth of the charge is most clearly and most hideously evident in Cambodia. We have no "agreements" to honor there, as successive administrations claimed there were in Vietnam. There is no Gulf of Tonkin Resolution giving legal trappings to an illegal war. In Cambodia, the law which forbade continuing American overt intervention has been circumvented. Sydney Schanberg reports in *The New York Times* that Bird Air, a "civilian" airline staffed by "retired" Air Force pilots, flying Air Force planes with the insignia painted out, is shipping weapons to Lon Nol. The American-backed corrupt regime controls only the capital and a few other towns and commands something less than the "hearts and minds" of the people. According to Anthony Lewis (also in the *Times*) nearly $7 billion has been spent in Cambodia, more than two-thirds of it for bombs. The cost to the Cambodians has been much higher: in a country that, before the American intervention, had a population of about 7 million, some 700,000 have been killed or wounded. A Senate committee reports that just under half of all Cambodians have seen their homes destroyed by war.

The agents of Kissinger's foreign policy—including the President in his barnstorming appearances—are asking for yet another $222 million to kill more Cambodians, perhaps because in the absence of an authentic foreign policy they see no alternative save to admit error, pack up and allow the remaining able-bodied Cambodians to work out their own solution. That probably would mean a reinstitution of the government of Prince Sihanouk, whose right to power the rebels seem to be promoting.

But it would probably also mean, for once, a clear-cut defeat of the Kissinger foreign policy. Cambodia was first brought into the war by Kissinger in 1970 when President Nixon approved the initial overt "incursion" there. By any standard, it was a mistake.

Henry Kissinger does not want peace in a Cambodia led by Sihanouk. But he can't win in Cambodia and there are indications that, short of full-scale American invasion, he will soon lose. That the war serves no ideological aim is compatible with Kissinger's scorn of ideology as a basis for power politics. Anthony Lewis calls the continued American involvement in Indochina "Mr. Kissinger's War." Hundreds of thousands bleed and starve and die there only to maintain our Secretary of State's reputation as the world's top gun.

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After Bal Harbour

George Meany's recent pledge that the AFL-CIO will not intervene in 1976 Democratic Presidential politics may turn out to be his greatest contribution in years to the welfare of working people in America. His programs and perceptions, rarely consonant with the needs of those he pretends to represent, were never more inappropriate. Spared Meany's active input, the Democrats in 1976 will have the chance to put together a program that will take into account the more innovative views of many of the AFL-CIO's constituent unions.

Although the AFL-CIO executive council, meeting last month in Bal Harbour, Fla., decided to enter the energy policy fray with a plea for regulation of the oil industry and government takeover of oil imports—and Meany himself made some cautious comments about eventual nationalization—it was but one small step compared to the conglomerate union's far-reaching responsibility to formulate policy proposals that respond to the steadily growing needs of its members. While Meany says he foresees economic depression (there is substantive evidence that it has already begun) and the AFL-CIO calls for "massive emergency measures," the palliatives proposed reflect a New Deal mentality that, while of some ameliorative value, would not even check the continuing economic downturn. If Meany knew what to do about the depression, his proposals would do more than blow upon the trial balloons of the Congressional Democrats: they would burst them and fill the national agenda with a score or more of dynamic responses marked by a basic demand for structural economic reform, backed by political struggle.

But Meany is no reformer. His expressed world view is as tied to welfare capitalism as it is to an aggressive imperial foreign policy. Although he now has joined Sen. Henry Jackson in claiming a retroactive switch on Vietnam, Meany and his lieutenants at Bal Harbour outdid even Jackson in cold-war rear-guardism by calling for approval of President Ford's request for more than half a billion dollars of increased armaments for the disintegrating regimes in Saigon and Phnom Penh. Meany has been a stalwart opponent of détente, and the costs of that to the American worker were made vivid last month when Prime Minister Harold Wilson went to Moscow and sealed a credit-trade deal that will pump British industry with upward of $2.5 billion in Soviet purchases.

Although Meany has made no promise as to his position once the parties nominate candidates, in the end he will probably support the Democratic ticket. Not even he could possibly wish a rerun of 1972. He might think of supporting his old pal Nelson Rockefeller if the GOP dumps Ford but, given the worsening state of the economy and the rising awareness of structural problems by working people, not even he could get away with supporting a Rockefeller in mid depression. And labor has no promising leverage in the national Republican Party.

As long as Meany remains in power, organized labor in America will be forbidden to assume the mature, critical role it should take in the nation's political process, one that would abandon self-destructive alliances with corporate interests in favor of class consciousness and action. So it's all to the good that the Democratic Party will be free of Meany's overt influence for a while, just as it was all to the good that last year the Democrats in Kansas City finally toppled Meany's political operative, Al Barkan, from his influential position.

The retreat of the AFL-CIO within the party has created a vacuum of labor influence that the more progressive unions in the federation—the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees and the United Auto Workers, to name but two—have begun to fill. Representatives of those and other unions will meet with other members of the Democratic Left next week in Chicago to consider possible strategies. A dynamic coalition is in the making. With the help of the new campaign finance law, it can begin to free the party from corporate influence and forge a political alliance sensitive to the needs of working people. If it comes off, it just might move George Meany and the AFL-CIO in the direction hinted at by his policy declaration on oil.

The Edelin Case

The trial and conviction of Dr. Kenneth C. Edelin in Boston on a manslaughter charge may, in the end, help to reconcile the seemingly irreconcilable abortion and anti-abortion forces. The conviction is almost certain to be reversed by the State Supreme Court. Dr. Edelin, a black, was convicted by an all-white jury, most of them Roman Catholics, in a community burdened with a virulent bussing controversy. But more important than possible bias is the issue of due process. The crime for which Dr. Edelin was convicted had not been previously defined; there was no state statute on abortion in Massachusetts. Every citizen is entitled to know what constitues criminal misconduct if only to avoid entanglement with the law.

The immediate effect of the conviction is twofold. It has initiated a national wave of sympathy for Dr. Edelin which, in both the short and long term, is not likely to strengthen the anti-abortion forces. On the other hand, the conviction has had, in some communities, a chilling effect, and doctors may hesitate to perform abortions after the third month of pregnancy. This in turn will discriminate against the less well educated, the poor, the disadvantaged who are generally slower to seek medical advice than their more fortunate sisters. But the conviction has also forced recognition of difficult moral and medical problems that arise when abortions are performed in the later time sequences. A society that exhibits in many respects a careless and callous attitude toward human life should take care not to emphasize an attitude already too evident. Like most doctors, Dr. Edelin feels that abortion is not the ideal method of birth control.

What the anti-abortion or right-to-life issue needs is full and frank discussion in the hope of reaching a consensus. Single issue agitations, particularly those charged with emotion, such as bussing and abortion, are invariably exploited politically for all sorts of purposes unrelated to the issues. Such issues need defusing, if only to keep them from being exploited by demagogues. Today there is some reason to believe that consensus on abortion is possible. The right to abortion in the early weeks of pregnancy is firmly supported. Both sides would probably agree on the importance of counseling and the need for

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greater stress on personal responsibility in a period of enlarged sexual freedom. And a measure of caution in the later phases of pregnancy would no doubt win approval from many, if not most, of those who endorse the Supreme Court's 7-to-2 ruling of 1973 which, for all practical purposes, explicitly legalized abortion. Under some circumstances fanaticism is vulnerable to reason and now is a good time to seek a consensus on abortion.

Chicago's Patron Saint

Chicago

When, twenty years ago, Richard J. Daley won the three-way primary election for Mayor of Chicago that assured him an unprecedented tenure of local and national Democratic power, one of his roguish barkeep aldermen declared, "Chicago ain't ready for reform yet." It still ain't.

The February 25th election, Daley's first primary since 1955, surprised most of the handicappers—and possibly even Daley himself—by the size of his lead over the three challengers. Independent reform alderman William Singer, whose delegation had unseated Daley at the 1972 Democratic National Convention, was expected to fare far better than the 2-to-1 defeat he suffered. Perhaps the biggest surprise was that law-and-order Edward V. Hanrahan, the former county prosecutor, drew a mere 5 per cent of the vote, running behind Richard Newhouse, a black state Senator.

Daley's advanced age and uncertain health didn't bother the 433,000 Chicagoans who lined up behind him, despite the defections of the two powerful Field newspapers and the refusal of the *Chicago Tribune* to endorse any candidate. All three papers had previously been strong Daley supporters.

People here still seem to believe that Chicago "works," despite what is demonstrably one of the worst school systems in a major city and a police department that has not only failed to stem the rising murder rate but also has been found guilty in the federal courts of discrimination against minorities. It is likely that Daley's ability to subjugate the black community, which now numbers nearly 40 per cent, is one of his chief assets in white areas. But mounting racial problems, including several federal findings of discrimination in housing and elsewhere, have done little to loosen the grip that the Mayor's patronage army holds on the black community. The influential black Congressman, Ralph Metcalfe, once a Daley stalwart, denounced the Mayor and endorsed Singer. All for naught.

Even more baffling to the outside observer is the fact that Chicago's record of official corruption, which would bring down the governments of most civilized nations, rolls off the public back. A half dozen of the city's fifty aldermen, officials of the county assessor's office, a former governor, the county clerk and the Mayor's own press secretary, as well as dozens of policemen have been convicted on various counts of bribery, fraud and other felonies.

The Singer campaign began with a couple of strikes against it: he is Jewish and liberal in a generally conservative town; in his early 30s, he appeared too young to take over Daley's father image. Some of the nastiest anti-Semitic and anti-black literature seen here in decades appeared in the late days of the campaign, but it did not stop establishment liberals such as Sen. Adlai Stevenson and Rep. Sydney R. Yates from heartily endorsing Daley.

The precinct power of Daley's hordes of public employees, curbed only slightly by a court decision outlawing patronage abuse, was evident even in an election where vote fraud was sharply reduced. There is simply no doubt that Daley, however despotic he appears to a rational onlooker, has a relationship with his city—that borders on the religious. He is one of the most extraordinary politicians this country has produced—running a city that can be understood only by the most informed cultural anthropologist or by the least sophisticated precinct captain. The reform movements of Philadelphia, Kansas City, Los Angeles and New York were not precursors for Chicago. Rather, when control of Chicago shifted from the Al Capone mob to a more routine brand of political machine back in the early 1930s, that was Chicago's reform. It was, thus, the first "reformed" city. It may never get much better.

DON ROSE

DECOMPRESSION IN BRAZIL

RICHARD O'MARA

Rio de Janeiro

A new Congress was sworn in at Brasília on March 1, and for the first time in a decade that ceremony may have had some meaning. The new Assembly issued from the elections of November 15. Many of its members are the political children of protest.

Brazil's military rulers were never so openly repudiated as they were on November 15—nor so surprised, their strategy having proved thoroughly ill-conceived. "Stunned into silence, they were," said one observer. And indeed, the post-election silence was unnerving, and the victors' repeated, and unsolicited, oaths of loyalty to the Brazilian Development Model, unseemly. One might have preferred a little crowing.

Most of the winners had been candidates of the Brazilian Democratic Movement, the MDB, the tolerated "opposition" party. The election was held to renovate the entire national Chamber of Deputies, a third of the Senate and all twenty-two state legislatures.

Congressional elections in Brazil do not normally absorb the national attention, since Senators and Deputies have had little influence on the generals who run this country. Abstentions and mutilated ballots usually run

Richard O'Mara is the Latin American correspondent for the Baltimore Sun.

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around 50 per cent. In November things were different. More than 80 per cent of the electorate voted, and most voted for the MDB, which won Senate seats from sixteen of Brazil's twenty-two states, gained 173 chamber seats and took control of seven state legislatures: Acre, Amazonas, Guanabara, Paraná, Rio de Janeiro, Rio Grande do Sul and São Paulo. Together, these states hold about half of Brazil's 105 million population. Previously, the MDB had controlled one state legislature, had only seven Senators and eighty-seven seats in the Chamber of Deputies.

The worst nightmares of the military hard-liners had become real. They were had, it seemed, by a universal conspiracy of voters. None among the sagacious military and technocrat advisers around President Ernesto Geisel, nor for that matter, the strategists of the MDB, had anticipated the outcome. The MDB had been expected to make some minor gains over the military's party, the National Renovating Alliance, ARENA, but not anything like the upset that occurred. In São Paulo, where factory workers are the highest paid in the country and the mystique of the economic miracle burns brightest, in that place where industrial capitalism is virtually a religion, the government was beaten 3 votes to 1. The election had its greatest symbolic impact in São Paulo.

Some who have lived through the past eleven years in Brazil, and know something of the dictatorship's habits, were waiting for the military to react—as it has in the past when civil authority sought to reassert itself—with terror, force and improvised "legal measures," such as the Institutional Acts. For example, one of these, AI 2, was imposed after the defeat of two of the army's gubernatorial candidates in the elections of October 1965. It wiped out Brazil's traditional political parties, and created the two aggregations, ARENA and the MDB, which thereafter pretended to contest for power.

The most infamous of the military's unilateral measures was imposed in December 1968, when the Congress refused to strip Deputy Marcio Moreira Alves of his immunity. He was said to have insulted the armed forces, and the brass wanted his neck. To get it, President Artur da Costa e Silva decreed AI 5. The Congress was closed as were the state legislatures. Thousands of public employees were fired, and hundreds of people stripped of their political rights. There have been other, less drastic reactions; they constitute the military's mode of governing. Over the past eleven years, each time Brazil tried to raise its head, the boot was pressed ever more firmly on its neck.

For that reason, the obsequiousness of the MDB winners was understandable. In 1966, the Congress was purged merely because the MDB had suggested a return to direct Presidential elections. Those who expected a similar reaction after the November 15th elections (the strongest provocation so far) were not Cassandras looking into a dark future but reasonable men taking a lesson from the past.

And for the moment it seemed that their fears were justified, for on January 30, Armando Falcão, the tough Justice Minister, announced on national television that a number of the MDB candidates had been elected with the help of the Brazilian Communist Party. Falcão's statement triggered a spate of grim rumors. The election results, many were convinced, were to be canceled.

But history has not been repeated—thus far. And that is being taken as evidence these days that "decompression" is actually occurring in Brazil, just as Samuel Huntington, the Harvard political scientist, student of and frequent visitor to Brazil, said it would be. The regime actually appears to be softening. Mr. Falcão said later that the winners would be permitted to take their seats in March. The Falcão scare, in fact, is now being interpreted as a sop to the hard-line in the military, a way of assuring them that the machinery of repression is still intact and capable of being activated.

General Geisel and his people have been shrewd enough to extract some benefit from the November electoral disaster. That it was held, and the campaign conducted with evident freedom of debate, is offered as evidence of the government's "democratic inclination." Of course, all opposition candidates were thoroughly screened for acceptability by the military. No "subversives" or "enemies" of the regime were permitted to run.

The outcome of the election, the government's defeat and acquiescence in it (so far) have lent credibility to General Geisel's promise that he would lead Brazil back to something resembling a democratic order. He made that promise shortly after his inauguration last year. Even though it had also been made—and then ignored—by his two predecessors in the Presidency, it rekindled widespread hope. That hope has been encouraged over the past year by the government's actions, and restraint in certain areas.

Press censorship has been less severe than in the pre-Geisel years, and public criticisms of the continuance of the Institutional Acts, especially Number 5, have been frequent. (AI 5 is truly a monstrous creation. It permits the authorities to do just about anything they care to do to a Brazilian citizen—and "legally," in the name of the Revolution.)

It was the press which exposed the incompetence of the federal health authorities before the outbreak of the intractable meningitis epidemic which has raged in Brazil for more than a year, and it forced a mobilization to combat it. (An interesting sidelight, and a hint of the softening trend, was the ruling in early February by a military tribunal which absolved Marcio Moreira Alves of the charges brought against him in 1968. [See Alves: "Brazil: What Terror Is Like," *The Nation*, March 15, 1971.] By this, the military has virtually undercut its own justification for AI 5.) But most important, General Geisel seems to have appreciated early in his term that an economic crisis was building in Brazil, and that the process of development the country has followed for ten years would have to be altered.

Thomas Skidmore, an American scholar on Brazil, described that process: "The hard-line military have made it possible for technocrats to manage a consumption-oriented economy whose benefits the middle and upper sectors can enjoy with little apparent fear of disruption from the marginal population." The overwhelming majority of Brazilians are in that "marginal population." Their incomes are abysmally low and have been kept that

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way, purposely, for several reasons. First, low salaries have been the most effective way to inhibit inflation. (The government sets the minimum salary, which is earned by more than 50 per cent of the workers in the country, and normally grants a raise once a year—on May 1, "labor day." Second, low salaries, combined with a prohibition of strikes, has been an effective lure to foreign capital. Third, and perhaps most important, subsistence level salaries have kept Brazilians at a low level of aspiration, and consequently reduced disruption on the assembly lines.

General Geisel hinted shortly after his inauguration last March that he intended to loosen up the wage policy. Last May he granted a 20 per cent increase in the minimum salary. He did this despite figures compiled (some say faked) by the preceding government of Gen. Emílio Garrastazú Médici, which would have justified only a 12 per cent increase.

The minimum salaries in Brazil (there are different ones for different regions) are so low that a 20 per cent increase did not really amount to much. For instance, the raise last May brought the highest minimum up from about $48 a month to $57. By September, inflation had worn that down to nearly 50 pre-increase dollars.

Still, a 20 per cent increase was something of a precedent, and was followed by other liberal measures. In October, Geisel ordered a 10 per cent salary increase, to take effect in December. By then it was known that he would grant another 20 per cent in May, bringing the total for the year (May 1, 1974-May 1, 1975) to 30 per cent, or just under the rise in the cost of living. The government also changed the fiscal mechanism by which minimum salaries are calculated in such a way as to permit higher raises.

The change in wage policy has several motives. One is to provide immediate relief. The Brazilian cost of living has risen alarmingly in the past year, mainly because of the oil crisis and as an effect of world inflation. The "marginal population" was no longer simply deprived but suffering severely; the middle class was uncomfortable. Further, the liberalized wage policy reflects a shift in economic thinking. Brazil has been doing well in the world market with its exports, especially of sugar and soy beans. But rocketing oil prices (Brazil is far from self-sufficient) made the technocrats aware of the country's vulnerability to shifts abroad. The economy, it was decided, was too export-oriented. By easing the wage policy the government plans to redistribute the national income and enlarge the domestic market by bringing some of the "marginals" into the middle class. The government also hopes in that way to expand its political constituency. From the military point of view, an expansion is needed. It is either that or a ban on future embarrassing elections.

A growing number of observers within and outside Brazil are convinced that a political liberalization will inevitably follow the economic one. For ten years the military has had no really active, widespread opposition. The resistance of the small elite groups—students, priests, the politicians of the so-called "festive Left"—was never a real threat. The "Communist menace" was of the regime's own manufacture, created to appease the really irrational among the army's hard-liners and to win approval of the United States Government.

The great Populist hordes, who venerated Getúlio Vargas and his political heirs, Juscelino Kubitschek and João Goulart, were the real potential threat to military dominance in Brazil. For that reason they were the most bloodied victims of the Revolution of 1964. They were cowed, beaten down, terrorized by the army and the police. In effect, they became the helots of the new regime, which has since thrived on their labor.

Now President Geisel—the fourth in the line of military Presidents—seems prepared to wake up the torpid masses. Whether he is acting out of economic necessity or humanitarianism is not really important; the result will be the same. By improving the economic situation of the "marginals," he will stimulate aspirations for further economic improvement, and for participation in the political process.

Brazil's military caste is not united behind President Geisel's purpose. The hard-liners, who have never really controlled the military governments but who have always greatly influenced them, had tried to deter the President from even permitting the elections of November 15. They feared the worst and their fears were justified. In a way, however, by losing the election, President Geisel has won his point against the hard-liners. If the election showed anything, it was that change could not be forestalled much longer in Brazil. □

THE FIRE-FIGHTER'S DETENTE

IS THIS A FOREIGN POLICY?

DAVID V. EDWARDS

The United States desperately needs a foreign policy—not a *new* foreign policy, *a* foreign policy. The recent brouhaha over the possible use of force in the Middle East to guarantee oil for the West, the fascination with Henry Kissinger's inner drives, the rush to condemn or defend our meddling in Allende's Chile, the moral exhaustion over our role in Indochina that seems unending—all these media phenomena and cocktail circuit topics seem to have prevented us from realizing that the United States no longer has a foreign policy.

In recent years, there has been growing criticism of American foreign policy—as if we had one. It is not, as some say, that American policy is bankrupt—there are no real assets left at all, but only liabilities masquerading as pieces of policy.

The responsibility lies first, of course, with the Secre-

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tary of State. But the important thing is not, as growing numbers suspect and as Richard Nixon is now reported by Charles Colson to have said in 1973, that Kissinger "really is unstable at times." The important thing is that, despite a stunning array of books produced before he took office and the "State of the World" reports he wrote for several years thereafter, Kissinger is a man singularly without the temperament and imagination required to develop a policy sufficiently comprehensive and venturesome to restore to America a world role commensurate with its resources and with the deep concerns of its people. Kissinger is essentially a fireman, unfortunately put in total charge not only of fire fighting but also of fire prevention, law and order, public welfare and the exchequer.

This understood, it is not surprising that the Nixon-Kissinger-Ford "policy" of "a generation of peace" consists almost entirely of periodic pronouncements, exclusive interviews, jet-powered fire-fighting expeditions to the Middle East, hastily drafted arms "control" *aides-mémoires* subject to no reassuring interpretation, and high-level intercontinental visitation. The only thing missing from this panoply is policy. Some have in the past celebrated American improvisation as pragmatic, undogmatic, unideological and constructive, arguing that the nature, the national character, of the United States is such that it couldn't or shouldn't, have a general, overarching policy. But that view, popular though it has been, is a misreading of American history from the days of the founding fathers, as well as a misunderstanding of the requirements of the emerging world situation and a misperception of the concerns of the American people.

Just as the founding fathers had a foreign policy of avoiding "entangling alliances," so that the New World could develop its strength and set a moral example for corrupt old Europe, so the fathers of the cold war in America—such bold and imaginative men as Marshall, Forrestal, Acheson and Dulles—developed a policy of entangling alliances to encircle any and all Communist states and to organize military resistance to changes in the *status quo* that might threaten the safety and prosperity of American capitalism around the world. However misguided all of those involved may now seem to many of us, there can be no doubt that America had and sustained a viable foreign policy in those years—with considerable assistance from the Kremlin and the domestic subversion hunters.

The cold war was socially created and maintained by the United States and the Soviet Union, sometimes through cooperative intransigence, at other times through inadvertence. But the usefulness of the cold war to the superpowers for reasons of domestic politics and economic interests eventually waned, and the emergence of independent Third World countries, destined to entice close-range superpower confrontation and ultimately nuclear proliferation, undermined the shared American-Soviet world view that was the keystone of the cold war. And so the cold war crumbled.

With it degenerated American foreign policy. But both pundits and policy makers were slow to notice this, for the *appearance* of policy survived the disappearance of the cold war, primarily for two important reasons.

First, American policy had long since taken on a *territorial* focus. What had originated as end-goals or process-goals—primarily strengthening anti-Communist regimes and teaching lessons to international aggressors—became transmuted into territorial goals: defending each and every border that marked off states having Communist regimes and "drawing lines" to establish the precise points for resistance to aggression. And this territorial mentality survived the cold war around the world, but most flagrantly in that least appropriate, least territorially boundaried region, Indochina.

The second reason for the persistence of the appearance of policy where in fact there was none was the obsession with *means*—meeting military force with military force, military aid with military aid, Sputnik with Sputnik, high school science with high school science. These means overwhelmed and often themselves defeated the ends they were to serve, not only in the world but in our minds as well. Nonetheless, the American experience in Vietnam—the nonterritorial venture that so discredited the efficacy of American military force—ended even that residual appearance of policy.

The only available surrogate for the vanishing cold-war policy of forceful resolve was the crippled orphan named "détente." The opening to China, the SALT accords and the Mideast mediation became the communal fathers of détente, not only in Washington but in Moscow, where the absence of policy was, if anything, even more characteristic.

In the despairing aftermath of Vietnam, when everyone wanted to avoid the anguish that would accompany recrimination, it is not surprising that everyone from Kissinger through Fulbright to the liberal press and public adopted the orphan. Nor that so few recognized and fewer still reported that the orphan, like the cold-war emperor, was naked.

What Kissinger has sought but cannot possibly achieve is détente without entente—relaxation without the basic understanding that must undergird any successful effort to reconstruct superpower relations on any basis other than cold-war hostility. The changes built on détente without entente can prove only evanescent and misunderstood—as has already happened in Vietnam, the Mideast and SALT.

The cold war *was*, despite its apparent virulence, a kind of condominium in which the superpowers controlled the conflict between them and supervised that involving their allies. That era is gone now, a casualty of successful postwar reconstruction and decolonization. No comparable condominium could be achieved now, even were Air Force One to be constantly airborne. Just as Air Force One and "Western civilization" require fuel, so does détente require entente.

And the entente now required is not simply a shared superpower understanding, a modernized "spheres-of-influence" arrangement, but a cooperatively developed

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new basis for relations among all four worlds and the concomitant domestic understandings that will allow for bigger gambles, greater benevolence and occasional failures.

The present détente is obviously besieged in both capitals by the military chieftains and the Senator Jacksons, for whom sincere conviction and political opportunity have fortuitously coincided to inspire what one hopes will eventually prove largely purposeless domestic quarrels, but which surface successfully and even glamorously in the policy vacuum and intellectual bankruptcy that still pervade Washington and, apparently, Moscow.

This pervasive bankruptcy and the domestic opposition to détente can be traced to the unquestioned, fundamental consensus among policy makers, politicians and pundits on the necessary role of military force as arbiter of world affairs. Kissinger and Jackson, the generals and the columnists, Brezhnev and Ford, all are at root Realists—self-pronounced and capitalized—sharing the old cold-war theory of world politics as a struggle of military force and will, in which the only hope for peace is an accommodation between two armed camps.

But the world has changed so drastically from the era when that seemed possible—what with the development and proliferation of nuclear weapons, the liberation and assertiveness of new states both rich and poor in commodities and natural resources, the emergence of nonstate—even anti-state—actors such as multinational financial and industrial enterprises, the opportunities seized by revolutionary terrorists—the list could go on and on.

Moreover, when we try to face new issues—the survival of the global ecosystem and the reconstruction of the global political economy—in a world of new actors, we still face them with old means: force, threats, deals, alliances, cartels. And many of the emerging actors naturally adopt our means exactly as they emulate our *bricolage*—the "fix-it" improvisation of Western civilization's head handyman, Henry Kissinger. For if it is astonishing that we no longer have real ends, it is not astonishing that the lesser states in the Third and Fourth Worlds tend to imitate us.

The lesson of this is that those who expect the newer states to fashion images of a new world order and to lead the older states of the First and Second Worlds on the path to redemption deceive themselves. The new states can upset the existing order, forcing reconsideration of unquestioned premises in the older states, but if there is to be a new world politics, it must be engineered by the major states; they have the resources and position to foster it. And since there is little reason to expect the required imagination and initiative to emerge from Moscow, the burden and the opportunity must fall predominantly on the United States.

Thus the United States must have a foreign policy —a policy not constructed in patchwork fashion from the fragments of the cold-war condominium and an admixture of deference to movements for national liberation and ecosystemic protection. A new American policy must be based upon a fresh examination of underlying realities of resources and actors, and upon an imaginative development of effective means and defensible ends.

The real politics, the determinant politics, of the era now emerging, not only in the world but in the nation, are the politics of energy—of human energy from food and of industrial energy from petroleum, the atom and the sun. The politics of military force and even those of economic arrangements pale in the face of strains on the food and fuel essential to the survival of men and machines, and even more vital to the survival of human hope and material progress on which empires and individual careers rise and fall.

These new concerns and currencies of politics at home and abroad have already generated new actors who challenge the supremacy of the nation-state, and who in coming decades may even threaten its very survival. Our world of nation-states composed of loyal citizens is increasingly being challenged by cross-cutting pressures from multinational enterprises with opportunistic careerist employees and transnational organizations with nonnational bureaucrats, as well as anti-national terrorist organizations. Furthermore, those citizens of leading states who are not also members of multinationals or transnationals are increasingly awakening to global perspectives on the energy, human and industrial, that is the life-blood of the states, and on the dangers of ecological rapacity and pollution. The emergent concept of territory, like the last frontier, is now global.

The net result of these new institutions and attitudes, still difficult to perceive without looking carefully, is major challenges to the allegiance of individuals. No state can long rule its people—let alone others—without the unquestioning allegiance of most of its citizens. Compulsion is no longer an option in the major states of what Kissinger terms "Western civilization," and will become increasingly difficult for the others as well.

In this context, if the nation-state is to survive the new challenges within and across its borders, it must again engender the confidence and commitment of its residents that once derived from its capacity to provide an autarkic security now no longer possible. Such popular confidence and commitment now depend more on economics than politics, more on resources than weapons. There will be no alternative to redistribution of the world's resources —a redistribution that will make the recent shift achieved by the OPEC countries seem trivial by comparison.

These energy resources and the requisite technology will be the major means of any new American foreign policy. But means without ends will be ineffectual and, still worse, uncompelling to the populace that will be called upon to sacrifice. Thus it is to ends that immediate attention must be given. For only enticing ends can engender the popular support for policy that détente without entente has been unable to muster. And ends can engender support only if they have a basis in ethics.

What then of ends? Many now argue that we need *an ethics of interdependence*—an ethics grounded in the proposition that if we are not our brothers' keepers our brothers will be our executioners. But for Cain and Abel we can substitute American democracy and Soviet communism and we are back in the global cold war of fraternal enemies. The ineluctable problem with an ethics

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of interdependence is that it derives its motivation from fear and is built upon an assessment of human nature as being self-centered and selfish—an assessment that appeals to, exploits, and engenders the worst in the ambivalent creatures we all are.

People are less likely to be good when informed or reminded that others are bad and so threaten them. They are more likely to be good if they are reminded of the constructive human impulses that are every bit as central to their natures. And the same is true of states. The more we emphasize the threats to our health and welfare posed by others, the more we sicken our own selves, warp our impulses, and render self-fulfilling our distorted images of men and nations.

Such assertion may sound unrealistic to those of us so conditioned by war, hot and cold. But it is only out of sorts with the presuppositions that undergird our policy in the era of the cold war and our lack of policy today. If we cannot appeal to and strengthen the nobler virtues of people at a time when our common fate is so increasingly obvious, our states and, *pace* Kissinger, our civilization, will indeed be strangled—by our own hand. When one thinks of the ready critiques of such efforts at reconstruction by self-pronounced realists of good will and earnest intent, one is reminded of Bertolt Brecht's remark about the vitriolic Viennese social critic Karl Kraus: "When the age came to die by its own hand, he was that hand."

Many of the best-willed critics of proposals for reconstruction share with the earnest advocates of interdependence a negative cast, a reliance on threats to our future, that will no longer allow us the imagination and beneficence that alone could promise not just preservation but improvement of the human condition on planet earth.

Most arguments for redistribution of the world's resources toward the needy appeal to desperation—fear that if we do not surrender some of our surplus now, the poor and hungry will soon seize much more, or else destroy it all. The point is not at all that these projections are not real prospects. Rather, the point is that our reliance on arguments from interdependence, far from ennobling us and our cause, will prevent us from moving toward the fundamental bases for constructive relations among people and between states.

In the longer run, internationally as locally, interdependence is not enough as a basis for a satisfactory global society, true though it be ecosystemically. As we know from our own experience, the only adequate basis for good relations is the exchange of nondependent things, of goods, deeds and words that one could otherwise obtain or achieve by oneself. In interpersonal relations, it is the good-will gift, the bonus, friendly word, courtesy and kind deed, that make the difference between correct formal relations based on reciprocal need or even fear, and friendly constructive relations. The same will prove true in relations among states.

And if we do not soon move, in international relations, beyond the realm of correct relations governed by the fear of what we can do to one another, into the realm of creative social relations among peoples and between states, the fabric of world affairs will not become strong enough to survive the wrenching redistributions, the military threats and the diplomatic failures that are inevitable in the impending age of states and anti-states, of ecosystemic reconstruction, of economic redistribution, and of newly mobilized and less state-oriented populations.

Such new patterns of relations are difficult to envisage while Indochina and the Middle East fester, weapons systems proliferate, economic structures falter and people lose faith. But these very conditions define the time when movement toward new ends and means is perhaps at last possible.

The new means must be increasingly directed toward individuals rather than bureaucracies. An example of both what is needed and what must be combated can be found in reaction to last year's hurricane in Honduras. Upon reports of devastation, citizens of Louisiana immediately gathered relief items, for they knew what it was to be devastated by a hurricane. The relief provisions were loaded upon National Guard airplanes for shipment to the people of Honduras. But the planes were not allowed to take off because the Pentagon refused permission, allegedly, it was reported, because it did not want to encourage in the Honduran people expectations of further American aid. And, when finally they were allowed to leave, the Honduran military commandeered the cargo and sold it on the black market.

The problems of bureaucracy and rapacity are as clear in such an event as the feelings of good will and empathy of ordinary people—citizens, really, of the world. Common instances like that, along with evidence that at a time of widespread economic privation American giving to charitable organizations hit an all-time high last year, and that public opinion polls express widespread concern for and desire to help the hungry abroad even though it raises the price of food at home, indicate that the will is still present in the American people. They are concerned and generous beyond their government's apparent wishes.

In these circumstances, it is time that our government, and the other governments of the world, take major steps to de-construct their feuds and reconstruct their relations. President Eisenhower once remarked that the people of the world wanted peace, and that it was time the governments recognized this and gave it to them. He might have added that if they don't, the people will take over and obtain that peace themselves, or bring the entire fragile structure of counterpoised war machines and dueling diplomats crashing down in their efforts to get it.

That is a price we need not pay. But the only alternative to it—the only alternative left to the Fords and the Kissingers, the Brezhnevs and the Kosygins—is a foreign policy that abandons our ritual dance of death for a recognition of our interdependence, and then goes beyond that to a program devoted to constructing a fabric woven of cooperative development of food and fuel as human and industrial energy, a redistribution of wealth, a renunciation of force, and encouragement of full relations, not just among policy bureaucracies but among peoples. That is now the only alternative to the "generation of wars and pillage" that seems the inevitable chaotic result of the present lack of an American foreign policy. □

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CASING THE DEMOCRATS #5

BENTSEN: MONEY MAN FROM TEXAS

JOSEPH C. GOULDEN

The Lone Star hair shirt is a damnably irritating garment to wear in post-Johnsonian Washington, especially when it is constantly pressed upon your attention. Two decades of nonresidency does not absolve an expatriate Texan of blame for Lyndon and his war, the profitability of the oil industry, John Connally, the Kennedy killing, the glut-fat of Texas' share of the aerospace-defense industry, the caricature boor in a white Cadillac with an oooogah horn and cow horns for a hood ornament.

Hence I felt a twinge of sympathy for Sen. Lloyd M. Bentsen (D., Texas) on the foggy Monday morning when he stood before six TV cameras, the national political press and a claque of whooping staffers and well-wishers to declare his candidacy for the Democratic Presidential nomination. The first question, when it came, was at batting-practice speed from the friendly Margaret Mayer of the *Dallas Times-Herald*. Was the country ready for a Texas President, given the wide public skepticism about oil, the state's most visible product?

Bentsen literally lunged at Mayer's soft-paced toss. He was proud to be from "the State of Texas." The fact that a candidate was from "Pennsylvania or Texas" shouldn't limit his aspirations. He remembered "when they said a man who was a Catholic could not be elected President," and he talked about John Kennedy's gutsy Houston stand-down of the Bible-Belt Gantrys in 1960. "I think the people of this country . . ." a burst of applause swept away the rest of the sentence, and Bentsen smiled and let it go at that.

Bentsen said what had to be said, deftly putting the brand of know-nothingism on any cad who opposes him simply because he was born in Hidalgo County, Texas. But substantially larger questions remain. Other than the undeniable truth that his origin should not *bar* him, what *qualifies* Lloyd Bentsen for the Presidency? What ideological and intellectual baggage does he carry as he tries to persuade the Democratic Party to give him the White House in a "can't-lose" election year? Is Bentsen indeed anything more than a prettified version of Lyndon Johnson, a man who doesn't scratch and cuss in public; or a small-bore John Connally?

Bentsen, and his chances of success, are true puzzlers, and Washington isn't sure it can find an identifying niche for him. To wit:

¶The national polls show that only 1 to 2 per cent of Americans are even aware the man exists, although he has been hustling the country for more than a year, tugging at every available coat sleeve. As a public speaker he is on a par with the leaden-tongued Sen. Henry Jackson. Bentsen pretends that his invisibility doesn't bother him—at this point in the race. He claims to see an increasing number of "flickers of recognition" when he walks through airport terminals—an utterly subjective prop for a serious Presidential ambition and, for that matter, a not surprising public reflex to an exquisitely dressed, gray-haired fellow who is smiling and nodding at everyone as he sweeps down the concourse with an entourage of aides, local politicians and journalists. Nonetheless, crystal gazers at *Newsweek* put him second only to Jackson as the likely Democratic nominee.

¶Bentsen is so anonymous in non-Congress Washington that he'd have trouble getting a table at a McDonald's if he came in during a busy hour. Yet his growth in Senate power, during the four years he has been there, is hauntingly reminiscent of Lyndon Johnson, circa 1948-52. The major difference, and a big one, is that Bentsen relies upon his head, not his muscle and tongue. He is damned smart. By most estimates, he understands economics and finance better than any other Senator—which is not to say his ideas are necessarily sound, only that he knows how things work. Fellow Democrats trusted him enough in 1974 to make him chairman of the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee, a cloutish position that entitles the holder to go around the country making speeches, and to dole out vast sums of money to colleagues. But no Senator feels truly close to Bentsen. Nor, for that matter, do the staff people who deal with him daily. "He is polite enough, but he simply doesn't act interested in you as a person," says one Capitol Hill man who has known Bentsen for twenty years. "And the more he gets out and meets people in his campaign, the worse off he is going to be." Yet Majority Leader Mike Mansfield is said to have mused privately that, in terms of ability, Bentsen stands "two heads taller" than any other Senator with Presidential ambitions.

¶When Bentsen came to the Senate in 1971, after knocking aside veteran Sen. Ralph Yarborough in the Democratic primary and former GOP National Chairman George Bush in the general election (both by 53-to-47 per cent margins), Vice President Spiro Agnew confidently dismissed his Democratic affiliation, and proclaimed him a member of the Nixon administration's "ideological majority" in the new Congress. Agnew's claim quickly proved pure bunk, for Bentsen cannot be counted as a "sure vote" on any issue. He is viewed with equal chill by the Americans for Democratic Action and by the American Conservative Alliance. The AFL-CIO's Committee on Political Education put him on its demon list in 1973, and the next year he shepherded a pension reform bill that means as much to labor, in dollars and cents, as any legislation since the Wagner Act. Bentsen's mastery of ideological camouflage is a distinct asset. As one marveling Republican Senator told *The Washington Post* last year, "Whatever his philosophy, it's so well disguised that no one reacts automatically by thinking, 'If it's Bentsen, it's gotta be good—or bad.' The result is that

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he gets a hearing." Of Bentsen's specific record, much more in a moment.

¶Of the five Democrats officially on the track as of this writing (Jackson, Udall, Harris and Carter are the others), Bentsen is generally considered to be the most conservative, in style as well as general attitude. By a fast evaporating thumb rule of politics, that means he should be the least attractive to the big-city bosses who are perpetually squirming to feed and appease the urban masses. No more. The bosses see insurance multimillionaire Bentsen as a lesser threat to the established order, and he has acquired some pals who are both interesting and powerful. In May 1974 alone he was keynote speaker

Lloyd M. Bentsen

at the annual spring dinners of the three largest Democratic machines in the nation—Richard Daley's in Chicago, Meade Esposito's in Brooklyn, and Peter Camiel's in Philadelphia. When Bentsen visits San Francisco, Mayor Joseph Alioto takes him fishing. He eats breakfast with Maynard Jackson, the black Mayor of Atlanta, and with Abe Beame of New York. By one count he spoke at more labor conventions in 1974 than George Meany himself. Now, offering muffins and scrambled eggs to a touring politician is not tantamount to support, and no boss intends to endorse a candidate seventeen months before the Democratic convention. The fact is, however, that Bentsen is getting on first-name terms with the guys who ran the Democratic Party in pre-McGovern years, and who see the 1976 convention as either their last hurrah, or a return to the days when the word "boss" meant just that. If the latter proves the case, the benefits could well flow his way.

The Lloyd Bentsen story begins in the Rio Grande Valley of Texas, an outdoor hothouse running perhaps 80 miles inland from the Gulf Coast port of Brownsville and extending northward for some 20 miles, the distance at which the irrigation water from the river is exhausted. The countryside beyond tells much about what people have accomplished in "the Valley." Drive south from San Antonio, and the grasslands swiftly deteriorate into sage, mesquite and cactus. Then you encounter the irrigation canals, and the lushness is sudden, and overwhelming—veritably land reclaimed from a desert. Cross the Rio Grande into Mexico, and the bleakness resumes. If a frontier younger than "the Valley" still exists in the continental United States, I have not heard of it. The mass migration began around World War I, when land promoters bought up the barren acreage, cut the first irrigation ditches, and directed a high-pressure sales campaign at farmers in the Midwest and Southwest. Because of its geographic isolation (a shopping trip to San Antonio is still an overnight expedition) and the origin of its Anglo settlers, the Valley is more Midwestern than "Texan." The street names of a town such as Weslaco (established in 1919, and named for the promoter, the W.E. Stewart Land Company) are a roll call of the farm belt—Indiana Avenue, Ohio, Missouri, Iowa. Although the Chicanos got there first, and are a numerical majority, the Anglos dominate Valley politics, run the economy and behave generally as if they were God's chosen agents.

Among the early Valley settlers were Peter and Dana Bentsen, Danish immigrants who, with sons Lloyd and Elmer, fled the frigid Dakota winters for the Texas sunshine during World War I. They bought and cleared 10 acres near McAllen, hard by the Mexican border, and raised citrus fruits and cotton.

If a man is aggressive, and has good business sense, a virgin territory such as the Valley offers opportunities for riches. One makes money from land in one of two ways: farming it or selling it. The Bentsen brothers (Lloyd Sr. being the current Senator-candidate's father) chose the latter route. Beginning in the 1920s the Bentsens drove cars for other land promoters, showing off acreage to interested Midwesterners. Around 1930 they went into business on their own, turning over literally scores of thousands of acres of farm and orchard land—some of it arable, some not quite so attractive. After twenty years, the Bentsens were operating upward of a score of corporations, had shares in at least eight banks scattered around the Valley, and controlled fortunes estimated at from $40 million to $50 million each. At the height of what he called "the immigration land business," the senior Bentsen once said, their sales "at times were running as high as $1 million a month." (Here a necessary caveat: Sen. Lloyd M. Bentsen, Jr., had no connection with his father's real estate transactions. Those land dealings are relevant only in that they are the wellspring of the family fortune, in which he shares.)

According to a plethora of lawsuits filed by unhappy buyers, the Bentsen brothers prospered by luring unsuspecting Midwesterners to the Valley and selling them

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worthless dry land on the misrepresentation that it was irrigated citrus land. The suits accused the Bentsens of passing tracts around among dummy corporations and friends to inflate prices, and then peddling them to outsiders. The test case was brought by Mr. and Mrs. Alvy Polmateer of Iowa, who had bought a 10-acre tract north of McAllen for $525 per acre.

The Polmateers charged that the Bentsen group and other associated companies had shown them land that supposedly was irrigated by "underground tile" and thus suitable for citrus. The $525-per-acre price was "standard" for the region, they claimed to have been told. In actuality, according to the Polmateers' suit, the water was run off from other irrigation, and so salty that it killed their citrus trees. They claimed the land was actually worth only $90 to $125, and they demanded the return of their money.

Rebutting, Lloyd Bentsen, Sr., contended that drainage water was as good as river water for growing citrus, and denied that he had conspired to hurt anyone. Everything he did, he testified, was "normal, ordinary, everyday business transactions—perfectly lawful in character."

A United States district court judge in Brownsville ruled that the Polmateers were entitled to get their money back, but refused either to ratify or invalidate their charges of Bentsen wrongdoing, and denied punitive damages. Nonetheless, the ruling prompted swift settlements of numerous other suits, mostly on terms favorable to the unhappy purchasers.

Lloyd, Jr., meanwhile, was finishing McAllen High School at the age of 15, distinguishing himself as a sprightly public speaker and Eagle Scout, and proceeding to the University of Texas, where he was president of the socialite Sigma Nu fraternity and was graduated from the Law School. In 1942 he enlisted in the Army Air Corps, trained as a bomber pilot, and flew more than fifty combat missions. Twice enemy gunners shot down Bentsen's planes; he came out of the military at 24 wearing a colonel's eagles and a Distinguished Flying Cross.

The year after V.J. Day was a good one for veterans turned politicians, and in a campaign emphasizing his war record Bentsen easily won election as Hidalgo County judge (meaning he was the county's chief executive officer; in Texas the post is nonjudicial). Bentsen decided he liked politics. He had a pretty young wife, two baby boys, daddy's money and no especial interest in sitting around the Rio Grande Valley watching the oranges grow. So in 1948 he worked hard enough to win a three-man race and become the nation's youngest (at 27) Congressman.

Arriving in Washington Congressman Bentsen got insider status via the good offices of Speaker Sam Rayburn, the capital's leading judge of political horseflesh. Bentsen found himself sipping bourbon and tap water in Rayburn's "Board of Education," clinking glasses with Cabinet officers, Supreme Court Justices, the reigning elders of both House and Senate and, occasionally, even President Truman. The only freshman Senator around was a gangly fellow named Lyndon Johnson, often accompanied by his administrative assistant, John Connally.

On certain gut issues Rayburn kept Bentsen moored fairly tight to Rooseveltian democracy. For instance, he was but one of two Texas Congressmen who voted to kill the poll tax. As he told a researcher for Ralph Nader's Congress Watch project three years ago, "Now that doesn't sound like much to you, but I promise you in 1949 there was blood on the moon when you did that. Like tarring and feathering you. I was from a rural district that was quite conservative and the only other one that voted for it was a fellow from . . . liberal Houston."

But most times Bentsen voted his constituency—and his pocketbook. During the McCarthy craze he made speeches about the need to "ferret out the Reds," and at one time advocated changing the law so that "spies and traitors" in the civil service could be fired "without all the costly litigation now involved in a due process dismissal." Although his family had vast farm holdings in the Valley, Bentsen apparently saw no conflict of interest in supporting the wetback labor system, whereby Mexican nationals sneaked across the border to work for 20¢ to 30¢ an hour. But he fought the Border Patrol tactic of rounding up the wetbacks for mass transport back home, and he opposed legislation that would have made it a felony for a farm to hire illegal immigrants. On union issues the CIO consistently scored Bentsen as anti-labor.

Bentsen's silliest caper—and one he wishes people would now forget as the youthful indiscretion of a recent bomber pilot—was a "nuke 'em" speech on the floor of the House on July 12, 1950, less than a month after the start of the Korean War. Bentsen's people protest that a man should be judged by his contemporary votes, not by a quarter-century-ago speech. But since Bentsen is the only serious Presidential contender to have advocated nuclear ultimatums, the speech is worth revisiting, if only to establish a base line from which the man claims to have elevated himself:

> Mr. Chairman, I speak to you of a subject which may result in a third World War or a lasting peace. . . . Some have said [this war] is merely a police action, but try telling a GI in the foxholes of Korea that he is just a cop on the beat. . . . It is time we face up to reality, time we admit we have a small war on our hands, one we want to end as quickly as possible to avoid a worldwide conflagration. . . . Our logistics problem is most complex. The distances involved are tremendous. Our enemies have a relatively simple problem of supply by merely transporting on overland routes. . . .
>
> What can we do to end this war now?
>
> My suggestion may result in my being labeled an alarmist or an extremist, but if it should result in an earlier end to this warfare and the saving of American lives, as I believe it will, then I mind not the labels.
>
> I propose our Commander in Chief, the President of the United States, advise the commander of the North Korean armies to withdraw his troops to the north side of the Thirty-Eighth parallel within one week, or use that week to evacuate a named list of principal North Korean cities which would be subjected to atomic attack by our Air Force. . . .
>
> There are those who will recoil in horror and condemn such action but to those I say it is deserving of these people who are so morally wrong as to attack peaceful neighbors in the dead of night, those who will accept the surrender of American boys, and then brutally murder them. . . .

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> We are fighting this battle with one hand tied behind us. Let us use everything we can to end this war now. . . . Better to let those who would destroy free nations know . . . the atomic bomb awaits those who would violate the peace of free men. . . .

Unsurprisingly, there was not a rush of support for Bentsen's proposal. Rep. Frances Bolton (D., Ohio), retorted: "For what purpose? To kill a lot of Koreans just because they are Communists? Would that stop the war? . . . Do we not know that . . . one atomic bomb dropped by the United States would open us to atomic bombing? But, more than that, it would prove to the Oriental mind the validity of the propaganda that we really are against Asia . . . that destruction is our purpose. . . ."

Bentsen spent three terms in Congress, easily winning re-election twice. He got along well with the establishment Democrats, and in fact joined Governor Shivers and other Democratic fat cats in refusing to support Adlai Stevenson in 1952 because of the tidelands oil issue. Had Bentsen wanted anointment for higher office, it was his for the asking, but by 1954 he was bored with the snail's pace of the House and wanted to "establish financial independence" for himself and his family.

Three weeks after Bentsen retired from Congress the family chartered the Consolidated American Life Insurance Co. (CALICO), with original assets of close to $7 million, largest initial capitalization ever for a Texas insurance company. Most of the money was in the form of mortgages held by Uncle Elmer. Lloyd, Jr., who became president, moved his home base to Houston, and acquired a fast but quiet reputation as a financial *Wunderkind*. The operation was bifurcated. CALICO bought an old-line Nebraska company, Lincoln Liberty Life, which did the conventional insurance work (selling and servicing policies). The money flowed to Houston, where Bentsen ran the investments portfolio, funneling both the insurance funds and his father and uncle's money into high-profit ventures—oil fields, mutual funds, apartments and shopping centers, banks in Texas and elsewhere. In 1967, Bentsen wrapped the insurance operation and assorted satellites into a catchall conglomerate called Lincoln Consolidated, Inc., with such disparate parts as a funeral home and a chain of savings and loan associations. The business community acclaimed the striving Texan: Lockheed, Continental Oil, Panhandle Eastern Pipeline, Houston's Bank of the Southwest, Trunkline Gas Company, all put him on their boards.

Concurrently, Bentsen kept a toe in Texas politics. As Houston finance chairman for Kennedy-Johnson in 1960, he raised more money than the rest of Texas combined. He almost ran for the Senate against Ralph Yarborough in 1964, only to be dissuaded by LBJ, who didn't want a nasty primary fight to muddy his own campaign. He kept close ties with John Connally, by then back home as Governor, and with Robert Strauss (the current Democratic national chairman), the *de facto* Democratic leader in Dallas and northern Texas. So by 1969, when his business interests were running so smoothly they bored him, Bentsen once again turned to active politics for himself—with Yarborough as the target.

Connally lent Bentsen his computerized mailing list and high-level staff help (specifically, George Christian, LBJ's last and most compatible press secretary; and Jimmy Banks, an Austin journalist-politico who has worked alternately for the powerful *Dallas News* and for governors since the 1950s). He began the race with about the same "name recognition" he now enjoys nationally—around 2 per cent. But Banks and Christian, men not unlearned in the art of hatchetry, knew that 30 per cent of Texans would vote against the mercurial Yarborough if he were running against General Santa Ana, the butcher of the Alamo. Things got nasty, and in a hurry. Able to outspend the chronically strapped Yarborough by at least two to one, the Bentsen people gave Texas heavy doses of the toughest TV commercials ever shown in the state. One strip showed the Weathermen storming the Vietnamese Embassy during the May Day 1970 demonstration in Washington, with tear-gas canisters popping amidst crowds of crazies and a National Liberation Front flag unfurling full-screen. Through the din of police sirens, an announcer's flat voice bore in: "Did Ralph Yarborough represent *your* views when. . . ."

Another strip pictured scenes of rioting during the 1968 Democratic National Convention. This time Bentsen himself provided the sound track:

> That was the violence in Chicago spawned by the supporters of Eugene McCarthy during the Democratic convention. Senator Ralph Yarborough endorsed McCarthy for President. Did he represent *your* views when he backed McCarthy?

Other spots using the same interrogatory technique hit at Yarborough for opposing the confirmations of U.S. Supreme Court nominees G. Harrold Carswell and Clement Haynsworth, and for voting against Sen. Everett Dirksen's proposed constitutional amendment authorizing voluntary prayers in public schools.

Yarborough complained bitterly that the ads "distorted" his views—although Bentsen has retorted that the incumbent Senator's campaign was even grubbier, with most of the invective directed toward his old enemies Johnson, Shivers and Connally, and the Bentsen family. As Al Reinert wrote in *The Texas Monthly* (December 1974), "The standard Yarborough campaign speech was a purplish diatribe on wetback exploiting, land defrauding, slaveholding, and other heinous everyday activities of the family Bentsen. When, late in the campaign, he finally added Lloyd, Jr. to his list of opponents, he usually sought to portray him as a kind of combination Boss Tweed and Alfred Krupp, with possible genetic deficiencies to boot." Bentsen won, with 53 per cent of the vote, but he left sour tastes in liberal mouths in Texas and elsewhere. He later beat Bush handily.

Given Bentsen's House record, his ultra-big-business background, the ideology of his Texas cronies and the savage treatment he meted the hapless Yarborough, the new Senator arrived in Washington with a ready-built reputation as a right-wing ogre. Liberals wondered darkly, for instance, whether this rich man's service on the Lockheed board would color his vote when the company asked for a government handout to stave off bankruptcy, and whether he still believed in nuclear diplomacy. Would Bentsen be anything other than a suave flunky for the oil people?

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As if to signal that he was back in politics for a lifetime stay, Bentsen and his family unloaded the Lincoln Consolidated conglomerate (for $30 million) and he resigned all his directorships. He estimated his personal wealth at $2.3 million and put it in a blind trust run by a Houston bank. (Because of the trust, Bentsen asserts he cannot estimate his current worth, although he "hoped" that increased real estate values have helped him. Texans are dubious about that $2.3 million figure; as one person said, "His land valuations in that estimate must be taken from the tax rolls of the Republic of Texas days.") And hindsight suggests that Bentsen had Presidential ambitions nestled within his bosom as early as his first year in the Senate.

The tip-off was a rather deliberate effort to dissociate himself from the conservative Southern-Southwestern wing of the Democratic Party, and to establish a record as an open-minded moderate who didn't cast knee-jerk votes on any issue. He shocked the Dixiecrat crowd with his very first vote, to ease the cloture rule and make it easier to halt filibusters. And he slapped Agnew's pawing hand from his shoulder with, "I'm coming here as a part of the loyal opposition, not as part of the Nixon forces."

Unable to get his first choice of the Senate Finance Committee, with its multitude of boodle-bag opportunities for an erstwhile financier, Bentsen settled for Armed Services. Then he got lucky. It fell to the lot of a subcommittee on research and development of which he was a member, to poke into the Navy's request for $2 billion to speed up building of a nuclear-powered submarine called "Trident." The subcommittee chairman, Thomas McIntyre (D., N.H.), was sick on the day of the hearings, and Bentsen slid into the presiding officer's chair. Right away the testifying admirals got into trouble. They evaded Bentsen's questions, or didn't know the answers, and expressed scant interest in giving him information. But this nutty freshman Senator kept boring in on them, and no amount of flag-waving would silence him. Bentsen finally decided that the accelerated construction the Pentagon wanted would waste $1 billion, and he got a subcommittee vote to halve the appropriation and put the work on a reasonable schedule. The Nixon administration had to crank up an extraordinary lobbying effort to beat Bentsen on a 49-to-47 floor vote.

The Trident venture was important to Bentsen for several reasons. It established him as a man who doesn't take what the Pentagon says at face value—a test that separates the serious Senators from what one Senate staffer calls "the easy lays." Bentsen didn't oppose Trident on shrill ideological grounds but because he thought the Pentagon was making a serious financial error. Further, although Trident put him nose to nose with such Senatorial bully boys as John Stennis, the Armed Services chairman, Bentsen behaved like a true clubman and didn't make anyone mad. By the time the fight ended he had been propelled into the tight inner clique that runs the Senate. (He finally got the cherished seat on Senate Finance in early 1973; Trident was his only major tiff with the Pentagon.)

Bentsen has moved much more cautiously in his dealings with oil, a major employer in his state, and a prime source of campaign money. And here a word of background: there are two oil industries. One consists of the major companies (Exxon, Gulf, Texaco, Shell, etc.) which are dominated by Eastern banks and managers, and which are "powerful" in Texas mainly in the sense that they hire a lot of people and pay hefty (but by no means excessive) tax levies. The majors are more interested in drilling in exotic Arabic states than they are in a small lease in Sabine County, Texas, and enough Populism survives in the state to make them vaguely unpopular. The other side of the industry consists of the so-called "independents," guys who might put down only one or two wells a year—"oilmen," in the sense that a mom-and-pop grocery is in the same business as A&P. The small producers exert more direct influence in Texas than do the majors because they are more numerous and are physically closer to the politicians and other people who run things. Further, the two sectors—majors and independents—despise each other, and say so loudly and often.

Early in his Senate career Bentsen was an unabashed supporter of both sectors; a stock speech line puts it, "Every Senator must be concerned about an industry which is critical to the economy of his state." Bentsen did all sorts of routine errands for the industry—making certain that an import bill had a provision for an adequate supply of oil-field pipe, for instance, or that the oil interests had their say at water-pollution hearings. He wrote legislation that would have gradually phased out ceilings on the price of natural gas, he voted for the Trans-Alaska pipeline, he fought against attempts to curb industry profits and increase its taxes.

To the dismay of the majors, however, Bentsen began misbehaving in early 1974—soon after he began taking himself seriously as a Presidential candidate. The juxtaposition is perhaps accidental; the Washington lobbyist for at least one major company thinks otherwise, however, and so do I. According to the lobbyist, "Bentsen realized that it's good politics to 'run against oil,' what with the gas shortages and the public relations beating we were taking beginning in late 1973. As an oil-state Senator he had to show he wasn't beholden to us. I appreciate his political position, but it's damned irritating to have an old friend turn on you. I'm not saying he has to speak out in our favor, but I think it's poor form for him to go out of his way to hurt us."

Bentsen's signal was in the form of a bill changing the royalty setup for government leases on offshore oil and gas properties. He would reduce substantially the thumping advance bonus payments which oilmen must make to the government for the right to drill on these properties —payments so large that all but the rich majors are frozen out of the program. The Bentsen plan would enable the independents to get a share of the action. Another section would quadruple (to 65 per cent) the royalty paid to the government, bringing the rate into line with that paid Arab governments. The majors howled and thus far the Bentsen bill hasn't moved.

An even graver shock came this January when Bentsen introduced a tax-reform bill that would end the depletion allowance for the majors, but retain it for the independents. (Bentsen's ploy was to limit the deduction to the first 3,000 barrels of oil pumped daily.) He estimated the bill would raise an additional $1.3 billion annually with-

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out harming the independents—who do about 88 per cent of the exploration each year. To the major lobbyist, "With this bill Bentsen crossed the Rubicon. He damned well had better win the Presidency, because he isn't going to get any more big-oil support for the United States Senate."

In the formal statement announcing his candidacy Bentsen was notably nonspecific about what he might do to save the nation's economy, beyond saying that the "paramount issue is economic recovery," which could best be accomplished through "individual independence." On energy, he favors boosting the gas tax, by stages, an extra 30¢ a gallon. Although he and Senator Jackson are at the point where they exchange suspicious sniffs when in the same room, they did join to advocate government-financed research into exotic energy sources. And Bentsen made the unions happy by introducing a bill that would extend Medicaid coverage to persons who are jobless because of the recession.

The problem with political moderation is that a candidate and his beliefs tend to fade into a murky grayness; one might not disagree with the fellow, but why doesn't he stick his neck out and say something? Such isn't the Bentsen style; indeed he says he intends to stay close around the Senate through 1975 and not make "sensational statements" simply to attract headlines (a dig at Jackson, the publicity hog, an odds-on favorite to smash his credibility to smithereens before the year ends because of impulsive statements on subjects of which he is ignorant).

Bentsen recognizes that he might be lost in the pack, but for now he is content to follow a political game plan worked out during the 1973 Thanksgiving recess. As a water tester, friends threw him a fund-raising dinner in Houston and made a surprising $375,000—enough to pay for a year's test run around the country. But how best to use it? Bentsen sat down with his two top political mechanics: Ben Palumbo, a tough-talking New Jerseyan hired away from Sen. Harrison Williams, and a man with considerable entrée to labor politicians; and Lloyd Hackler, a veteran of the LBJ White House who deliberately conceals considerable political savvy behind a dumb-Okie façade. They set four goals for the first year: to get close to Daley, Esposito and other local bosses; to wheedle as much coverage as possible from the regional press, so as to increase Bentsen's visibility outside Washington; to court national columnists in the hope that they'd fall into the habit of mentioning his name as a potential candidate; and to identify him with the economic issue. The brain trust *thinks*—but can't prove—that it accomplished the first-year goals; that the groundwork has been laid for a gradually intensifying exposure of Bentsen. That he has not yet emerged as *the* Democratic spokesman on economic issues, as Jackson has on energy, is an irritant, but one they think can be overcome once Bentsen kicks into high gear.

What are Bentsen's advantages? He can attract money, most if not all of it from Texas at this point, and he is preparing to launch a direct-mail campaign to raise even more. The existing $1 million kitty should get him through 1975; he'll need perhaps three to four times that much for the primaries. Bentsen feels the country is ready for a politician who doesn't make insultingly impossible promises; that his sixteen-year hiatus in politics, and his demonstrated ability to run a complex operation, set him apart from the "career candidates." Democratic National Committee Chairman Robert Strauss periodically renews his blood oath of impartiality, but no one can be found who takes him seriously; in the words of one Texan, "If Strauss is now a neutral he sure learned a lot in Yankeeland." With a brokered convention a distinct probability, control of the Democratic national machinery could be a valuable asset. And, finally, Bentsen is feeling the first caresses from people who want an early seat on the bandwagon—specifically, Gov. Milton Shapp of Pennsylvania, who thinks an Eastern Jewish liberal is just what the Bentsen ticket needs for balance.

What are Bentsen's disadvantages? A labor political operative, confessing at the outside that he "detested" Bentsen when he first came to the Senate, says, "I feel good about the man thus far, probably because I expected him to be damned bad, and he turned out to be a reasonable man. But a couple of things nag at me. He did an about-face from what he was in the House, and I think that opportunism is the reason. How do I know that he won't pull another switcheroo when he's President?" Another politico, this one a staffer at the Democratic National Committee: "Bentsen doesn't have any ready-made constituency other than Texas. The 1976 election is going to be decided in favor of a leader who has an issue. Bentsen isn't a leader, and he's full of crap if he thinks he 'owns' the economy."

Another disquieting factor is Bentsen's continuing friendship with the renegade Connally, and his ability to work the same audiences and money-givers long identified with conservative Republicans. In December, to cite a notable example, Bentsen attended a quiet luncheon in Los Angeles with the inner circle of former Gov. Ronald Reagan's financial backers, including Holmes Tuttle, Justin Dart, head of the Dart Industries conglomerate, and Jack Wrather, a Texas-born oil producer and television magnate. Some of the participants said later they considered the luncheon a mutual fishing expedition—Bentsen trying to sell himself to the business community; the Californians looking over a prospective businessman-candidate. And such Bentsen foes as Ralph Yarborough keep bringing up a trip the Senator made to the Texas border with President Nixon in September 1972. Although Bentsen claimed he had been told the trip would be "nonpolitical," Nixon continued on to a GOP fund raiser at Connally's ranch, and the Committee to Re-elect the President eventually paid the plane bill. (Bentsen, angered, sent the Treasury a check equivalent to the air fare from Washington to Laredo.)

Can Bentsen make it? One of his staff members likes to tell a story about the 1970 primary race against Yarborough, the one Bentsen began with a 2 per cent poll rating. The twenty-four journalists covering the campaign put up $5 each to make a pool on the winner and his margin. Four of the reporters were covering their first Texas political campaign; each picked Bentsen. The twenty veterans had been around Texas for years. They bet on Yarborough. □

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PARTY SPLITS IN BRITAIN

Recession, EEC and Mrs. Thatcher

RICHARD BOURNE

London

The emergence of Margaret Thatcher as leader of the British Conservative Party is perhaps the most surprising personal choice since Benjamin Disraeli formed the modern Conservative Party out of a rump of disgruntled Tory squires in the mid-19th century. Today, as then, Britain's political and industrial system is going through a crisis.

More than most of the industrialized countries now wrestling with inflation and recession, Britain has always prided itself on the efficiency of its democratic institutions. The national myth is that not only has the Parliamentary system, for more than a century, enabled governments to represent the aspirations of the governed but Parliament can always summon up a high quality of leadership in a crisis. Yet now, after two Parliamentary elections in 1974, and with numerous forecasters suggesting a million unemployed and an inflation rate up to 30 per cent in the current year, both assumptions are being vigorously questioned. In the process, the system itself, and the Labour and Conservative Parties, are being split open.

The modern system, of these two parties alternating monopoly powers of government based on variously interpreted mandates, has been in effect only some forty years. Before that there were more parties with weaker party discipline, and both the electorate and the range of government activity were more narrowly drawn. Last year's atmosphere of national crisis, generated by the Heath government's confrontation with the miners and by accelerating inflation, punctured the system in three ways.

First, Parliament had to accept the fact that, instead of there being just Conservative and Labour MPs, with a handful of Liberals thrown in for old time's sake, it had after October to recognize that Scots and Welsh Nationalists, as well as the Protestant Loyalists who swept nearly all the Ulster seats, were permanent additions. (And, although British commentators tended to play down the Liberal performance in October, because exaggerated expectations had been built up when the party elected fifteen MPs in February, its achievement in collecting 18.3 per cent of the votes in the latter month was the best it had done since the 1930s.)

Second, as a result of the Nationalists' success, the Labour government formed in February decided to offer Scotland and Wales a kind of home rule. Already, the regional powers of London's departments of trade and industry are being transferred to the Secretaries of State for Scotland and Wales, and a white paper on elected assemblies for Edinburgh and Cardiff is likely to be followed by legislation this year. It is becoming clearer that these assemblies must have more power to raise revenue than was anticipated when Wilson's government first advanced down this road. But few British MPs have quite appreciated how little they might be left with in a Westminster Parliament if, for instance, North Sea oil became Scotland's oil, and nationalization north of the border came to mean public ownership by a Scottish state.

Third, the modern bipartisan system is due to receive a further blow when a referendum is held on Britain's continued membership in the EEC. The idea of a referendum on one issue alone, which has no precedent in British politics, was put forward when Labour was still in opposition by Tony Benn, the present Secretary for Industry and favorite left-wing Socialist bogeyman for the conservative press. Few Labour MPs were enthusiastic for the idea, but it crept into the party manifesto as a compromise between pro- and anti-EEC members of the party at a time when the EEC had become unpopular with the public, and as a promise which might score points off Edward Heath's doubtfully honored pledge to enter the EEC with the "full-hearted consent of the British people."

The referendum, which requires a special Act of Parliament, has now been promised by the government for midsummer and already broad groups are starting propaganda for and against the EEC. In terms of the political system, a referendum is a bad blow to the *status quo*. It detracts from the authority of the MPs and governments, who for decades have been cheerfully making decisions on all kinds of single issues, by virtue of their representative standing and with only the quinquennial, multi-issue general elections to restrain them. More particularly, it is a blow to the existing concept of parties, as coalitions of people interested in several issues, whose allegiance to their party requires them to turn whichever way the majority of their colleagues wants. In fact, there are both Conservative and Labour MPs on both sides of the EEC referendum. Of the British parties, probably only the Liberals (overwhelmingly for the EEC) and the minuscule Communists (overwhelmingly against) could even hope for a monolithic stand on this issue.

How then is the British crisis affecting the two major parties? In the case of the Conservatives, traditionally a less ideological party, the leadership contest which elected Mrs. Thatcher on the second ballot of Conservative MPs dramatized the issues at stake and hinted at the way the Conservatives will seek to resolve them—by a deft combination of familiar nostrums wearing a more attractive face. Mrs. Thatcher, whose only ministerial experience had been as education minister in the Heath government, is widely regarded as a right-wing enthusiast for competition and the free market. She challenged many of the beliefs of progressive educationists during her term in office and produced a plan for housing mortgages in the October election campaign which would have been particularly helpful for young married middle-class couples.

Mrs. Thatcher emerged when and as she did for two connected reasons: first, because she was prepared to run against the extremely dominant figure of Edward Heath in the first ballot of the complex electoral system which had been devised by Lord Home, a former Conservative

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Prime Minister, she benefited from the votes of all those who were eager to force Heath out on the first ballot, whether or not they much cared for her. By so nearly succeeding on the first ballot, she became unstoppable. Second, she succeeded in distancing herself from the actions of the Heath cabinet of which she was a member, at least in retrospect. This enabled her not only to collect the votes of those who had been "out" during Heath's autocratic reign, but also to imply that she was against many of the Heath measures that had become unpopular in the Conservative Party—notably the prices and incomes policy which went down to defeat with the miners' strike of winter 1974 and the industrial interventionism which became a precedent for further state support of private firms under the present Labour government. She has made it clear, however, that she does not renege on Heath's commitment to membership in the EEC.

Whether at the time she really dissented all that much from the activities of the Heath cabinet is now rather doubtful. It appears that she opposed two policies which have helped to make her right-wing reputation, although she advocated them in public with the debating skill that is one of her main strengths. These were the cutting off of free milk in elementary schools, which was one of the first Conservative public expenditure cuts in 1970, and the subsidized mortgage scheme which was a powerful vote winner for her party in last October's election. At the Department of Education she was also slow to adopt one of the planks that has made her memory popular—the introduction of nursery education for 3- and 4-year-old children—and she did little in practice to make good her sloganizing about increasing parental choice in schools.

In fact there were other possibilities on the Conservative horizon. Among the most prominent were William Whitelaw, a centrist former Northern Ireland Secretary, whose loyalty to Heath caused him to rule himself out for the first ballot, and who has now agreed to be Mrs. Thatcher's deputy leader after being runner-up on the second around; Edward du Cann, a successful merchant banker and chairman of the backbench Conservative committee, whose antipathy to Heath kept him out of office during the last Conservative government, and Sir Keith Joseph, a right-wing protagonist of middle-class values who was formerly minister for the social services, who has acquired a reputation for verbal indiscretions and who seems shy of political combat.

At a stage further removed were other persons too. Sir Christopher Soames, a former minister of agriculture and Sir Winston Churchill's son-in-law, was one such dark horse. He is currently EEC Commissioner for foreign trade and has already started to participate actively in the referendum campaign on the pro-European side. However the fact that he is not now a Conservative MP and that the EEC question is not yet finally settled made him a somewhat premature runner. Rather similar considerations applied to an even more outside chance—Enoch Powell, the maverick former Conservative MP, who now represents the Northern Ireland seat of Down, South, as a United Ulster Unionist, after telling his working-class Tory followers in England to vote Labour at the two elections of 1974. Of the leading figures in the Conservative universe, Powell is the only one impenitently opposed to British membership of the EEC. It was because Labour promised a referendum on this issue that he voted Labour last year, and advised his friends to do the same.

Powell now has few friends among Conservative MPs, but, as his admirers point out, the same was said of Winston Churchill in the 1930s. Although bitterly hated on the Left for his anti-black speeches in 1968, he retains a fund of good will among the public at large. His political stance contains at least one major contradiction, in that the manual workers who sympathize with him could prove the first victims of the monetarist deflationary policies of which he was an early advocate in Britain. (In Northern Ireland, where the shipyards depend on government subsidies, he has already had to modify his line.)

Powell is widely seen as a potential Prime Minister only in conditions of total national disaster, when he might be drafted by general public demand. In fact, his cross-party support makes it easier to imagine him as the head of a hypothetical "government of national unity" than some of those, like Labour's James Callaghan or the Conservatives' Whitelaw, who have been touted for that role. The referendum is likely to provide him with a field day. As one of the few national figures opposed to EEC membership—and the only one starting from the Right of the spectrum—he is bound to benefit enormously from the requirements of "balanced coverage" which will dominate media reporting of the campaign. As of now, it seems impossible that Britain will vote to leave the EEC, but if it does so that could well cause a change of government, and Powell would get his chance.

But while the Conservative MPs were busy with their leadership election, they were also concerned with the wider popularity of their choice, and the sort of policy on which they might hope to win elections in future. Polling data suggest that these two things link together in a way which has proved increasingly adverse for the Conservatives. For the ten years that Heath led the Conservatives he was almost consistently rated less popular in opinion polls than the Labour and Liberal leaders.

This might not matter so much if the Conservatives themselves were making progress, but the two elections of 1974 (in which they took, successively 38.2 per cent and 35.8 per cent of the popular vote) were a rude awakening. By the end of the year they were left with vestigial support in Scotland and Wales, their Ulster Unionist support had collapsed after the Protestants had rejected power sharing, and inside England itself there was only a scattering of Conservative MPs outside the suburban and rural constituencies of southern and central England. For a party which gets nearly 60 per cent of its votes from manual workers—with more than 40 per cent of its voters actually belonging to trade unions—it had acquired an unusually sectarian, middle-class air.

Behind Mrs. Thatcher's election, therefore, were substantial social and political issues. She and Joseph talk freely about the virtue of the middle classes and the benefits of competition, and appear ready to trade high and continuing unemployment for a slowdown in inflation and the depreciation of money. There is much sympathy for this view among the "older" middle class and not only

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has a Middle Class Association been formed to express its views, but the *Times* of London has been echoing for weeks to similar laments in its correspondence columns. By this reasoning, the Heath government was almost as treacherous as the overt antagonists of the Labour Party: by lavish deficit financing it sped price inflation on its way to the present level of 19.9 per cent a year; it switched to an interventionist role in the economy, symbolized by the nationalization of Rolls-Royce and a prices-and-incomes policy; and it took on, but did not defeat, the trade union movement in its industrial legislation-and-incomes policy.

However other Conservative MPs, both centrist and Powellite, draw different conclusions from the Heath government. Although their views vary, they see more clearly that its failure to dominate the union movement suggests that this objective is just not practicable, and has the inevitable effect that Conservative support from outside the middle classes drains away in the attempt. The centrists, however much they are respectful to bourgeois values, are also aware that the British middle classes themselves have changed. While manual workers have been undergoing a process of embourgeoisement, the middle classes have become more dependent on the state, more unionized and more willing to strike or take quasi-industrial action.

Illustrations from the world of education emphasize the social dimension involved in this struggle to recover a Conservative identity, and to rebuild a viable Conservative coalition. Whereas, before World War II, a significant proportion of children were in private schools, now 95 per cent are educated at state schools. Indeed, much of the pressure to abolish the selective grammar schools for 11-to-18-year-olds and to create comprehensive schools instead has come from middle-class parents, using the state system, who reject the stigma of failure which the old system involved for most children. Significantly, the drive for comprehensive schools has been canalized through the Labour Party and, while centrist Conservative MPs sympathize with it, Margaret Thatcher as education minister did her utmost to stem the comprehensive tide.

In the language of the Conservative press, the Labour Party is always having "splits"; the Conservatives occasionally have "differences of opinion." But if the leadership question sums up some important differences of opinion for the Conservatives, it is equally true that 1975 may well see some unusually public quarrels within the Labour Party. There are two main causes for division in the near future: the referendum on the EEC and the economic measures required to deal with problems of inflation, recession and balance of payments deficit. To some extent these two overlap; it is easy to imagine that grass-roots Labour attitudes to the EEC may be affected by isolationist intransigence during a recession.

Labour's situation over EEC membership is very fissile. The compromise adopted by the Labour government is that, if negotiation can lead to terms of membership which are significantly less onerous than those accepted by the Heath government, Labour would support membership at a referendum. In fact, the attitudes of members of the cabinet range from the strong pro-Europeanism of people like Roy Jenkins, Home Secretary, and Mrs. Shirley

Juhl, P.I.B. (Copenhagen)

Williams, prices and consumer affairs minister, to the hostility of Tony Benn, industry minister and Peter Shore, trade minister.

It is probable that a majority of Labour MPs would support continued EEC membership, if they were satisfied by the terms. But the problem for Labour arises from the prospect of a referendum at a time when it seems probable that the bulk of constituency Labour parties, and the bulk of trade unions will oppose continued membership on almost any conceivable terms. (Labour's national conference, for example, has never passed an unequivocally pro-EEC resolution.) The prospect therefore emerges of a Labour government—which itself may have to accept public dissent from some of its more prominent members—trying to shepherd extremely reluctant supporters into a yes vote on Europe. It is quite possible that Britain's continued membership may be insured largely by Conservative and Liberal votes, with the majority of Labour voters saying no. (It is also possible that majorities in Scotland and Ulster, for example, may vote no.)

Why is it that Labour remains markedly more divided than the Conservatives on this issue? As so often, there are "official" reasons, advanced by those who dislike EEC membership, and there are also "gut" reasons. The official reasons include the idea that the EEC is a "rich man's club" which has turned its back on the developing world; that the supranational bureaucracy based in Brussels is undemocratic and will undermine Britain's parliamentary system; that Britain will lose power to order its own affairs, and in particular, that EEC regulations and principles of free movement of capital and labor will make it much harder for Britain to move further in a Socialist direction, with more public ownership; and that the common agricultural policy, which cuts Britain off from world food markets and makes consumers subsidize European farmers, is harsh on Britain's working class.

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Among the most ideologically committed left wingers the arguments about nationalization and a responsibility toward the Third World are also "gut" issues. But the visceral reactions cover a much wider compass among Labour partisans and trade unionists. Some of the main fears relate to an insular concern about a loss of national identity: the Heath government decimalized the coinage and introduced metric units of measurement, out of a twin commitment to "efficiency" and the EEC, and these minor changes symbolized what many people disliked. At a time of inflation and of relative economic decline in Britain, there is a quite understandable working-class conservatism ready to be mobilized against the EEC. (Historically, too, the British Labour movement has never established very close links with its European neighbors: the fact that the European movements were so long paralyzed between Communist and Socialist wings, and that the British were diverted by colonial and Commonwealth concerns may help to explain this coolness.) Insularity is not the only feeling—a lot of workers think the EEC will stimulate business firms to rationalize their operations and shut down plants: that is hardly surprising, since Macmillan and Heath originally sold the Conservatives and management on EEC membership in terms of the spur to efficiency that would be provided by a larger home market.

The second rock which may splinter Labour is economic adversity. Britain's relative success in attracting oil money, and thus improvement in the terms of its trade in commodities other than oil have given the Labour government slightly more room for maneuver than seemed possible in 1974. However, with one of the highest rates of inflation among industrialized countries, and with unemployment creeping to a level which most experts think must pass a million, there is a strong temptation for a Labour cabinet to introduce a wage freeze. If it did so it would almost certainly bid farewell to Michael Foot—the left-wing Employment Secretary who is also opposed to EEC membership—and provoke a row with the trade union movement as serious as the one that gravely wounded the Wilson government between 1966 and 1970.

The social contract on which Raymond Williams has already written for *The Nation* ["Britain After the Election: The Size of the Crisis," November 2, 1974] was the product of both the Wilson and the Heath confrontations with the trade unions. The Labour Party leadership recognized that it was impossible for a government to "discipline" the unions—and that the Labour movement itself would be crippled by the attempt—while any wage freeze, though it might work in the short term, would be more than paid for subsequently in higher wage claims and faster inflation. So the Labour Party leadership and a handful of the major union leaders invented, instead, the social contract: a loose concordat by which Labour in government promised to increase the social dividend, while the unions provided wage restraint in return.

So far, the Labour government has delivered a number of actions, such as the introduction of food subsidies, to keep its side of the bargain. But the unions—partly because of the looseness of the contract, partly because they could not volunteer a cut in real wage rates, and partly because of the element of protective insurance which enters wage bargaining in a period of unpredictable inflation—have failed to restrain the growth of wages. The result is that, thus far, the government has appeared to be standing by as the free market wrestles to remedy the pressures of rising wages in a period of recession by a wave of bankruptcies and rising unemployment. In the circumstances, a number of Ministers—ironically on the right and pro-EEC wings of the party—are hinting that they would like the government to intervene more actively to curb wage settlements in order to limit the damage and equalize sacrifices.

Labour splits and threats of splits tend to be exaggerated in the British press, partly because the participants like the publicity, and the party's powers of recuperation (it is a coalition that frequently agrees to disagree) are regularly underrated. The whole social contract enterprise, whatever its fate, reflects the determination of both sides to prevent an irreparable breach between the political and industrial wings of the party. (One of the problems here is that the parliamentary Labour Party has become middle class more rapidly than has the general council of the Trade Union Congress.) And at the back of many Labour minds are two bitter memories in particular: of the split in 1931 when Macdonald formed his national government during the slump, and of Bevan's fight with Attlee and Gaitskell in the 1950s. On each occasion the result was to push Labour out of office for more than a decade.

Nevertheless, 1975 catches Britain with unusually heavy strains not only on the two major parties but also on its constituted parliamentary system. The Conservatives' bold move in choosing a woman leader reflects a willingness to search for new directions. Parliament's diminishing role is reflected not only in the two somewhat inconclusive general elections last year, and in the fact that legislation is now being prepared to give power to Scotland and Wales. It is also summed up by two opposite slogans: the "who rules the country?" slogan of the Conservative press during the 1974 miners' strike, which in the outcome demonstrated the limits of government power; and the "threat to British sovereignty" slogan of the anti-EEC campaigners now, which calls attention to the limits of parliamentary and governmental action within the EEC (and indeed within the modern world, inside or outside the European communities).

The referendum campaign is likely to strain the system more than anything else—although it could also locate new leaders who might enable Britain to break out of the pessimism and economic failure that has dogged the country over the last few years. It may smoothly produce a yes verdict on Europe. It might also produce a rambunctious, masses vs. elites type of conflict in which charismatic Populist figures like Foot, Benn and Powell join forces to lash the conventional expert wisdom which has been so potent in steering Britain into the EEC. For the British, election campaigns perform several functions, only one of which elects a new government. They also sublimate class conflict, reiterate the national myth of democracy and, one sometimes suspects, provide an attractive diversion from tackling some of the harder economic and technological problems. In the 1975 context it is safe to assume that a referendum will be about more than the price of beef in the EEC. And it could transform British party politics. □

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BOOKS & THE ARTS

That Incandescent Byron

BYRON'S LETTERS AND JOURNALS: 'Alas, the Love of Women.' Volume III 1813-1814. *Edited by Leslie A. Marchand. The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press. 285 pp. $11.50.*

GREGOR ROY

Byronic scholarship, which has ranged somewhat disparately from Leigh Hunt's sprawling *Lord Byron and Some of His Contemporaries* (1828) to André Maurois' terse *Byron* (1930), has tended to treat the multiplex aspects of the poet's personality with that kind of ceremonial, isolative reverence which seems to have vitiated most biographical appraisals. This observation is particularly applicable to scholarly compilations of his letters and journals, the most definitive of which has been, until recently, R.E. Prothero's intrinsically admirable but editorially deficient six-volume edition published between 1898 and 1901. John Murray's two-volume collection, published in 1922, appeared as an equally curtailed supplement to Prothero's pioneering endeavors. In addition to being notably incomplete, these earlier texts were also bowdlerized in deference to the refined sensibilities of a reading public ostensibly more prudish than that which will greet this present edition. Byron's occasional fescennine descriptions were considered inappropriate for inclusion in academic works designed to uphold a decorous standard of scholarly propriety and critical dignity.

In Leslie A. Marchand's proposed multi-volume edition of Byron's letters and journals, however, our more worldly contemporaries are being presented with unexpurgated editions of original texts which are not only annotated with uncommon care and precision but which also contain illuminating appendices, lists of forgeries and extensive bibliographical indices. It is also pleasing to note that while Prothero persistently imposed sentences and injected phrases which he assumed to have been Byron's implied but unexpressed intention, Professor Marchand has been scrupulously faithful to the original documents. The first volume in the series, *In My Hot Youth,* concluded with the poet's emblazoned Mediterranean tour, while the second, *Famous in My Time,* ended with his triumphant return to the allurements of Regency society and Whig politics. This third volume, which comprises his personal letters of 1813 and the first of his five private journals, displays Byron at the zenith of the fame he enjoyed after the spectacular success of his *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage.* It includes—etched in poignant and sometimes even virulent terms—his tempestuous and tortured relationships with such targets of his affections as Lady Caroline Lamb, Lady Oxford, his half-sister Augusta Leigh and Lady Frances Webster. Also contained in this most comprehensive collection of his letters, which are arranged in chronological order, is Byron's hitherto unavailable correspondence with Annabella Milbanke. His spelling and punctuation are reproduced faithfully, with all the vagaries and inconsistencies of which Byron himself was so acutely and embarrassingly aware (he writes to his publisher: "[Ismuhus] Isthmus (curse the word I can't spell it)" and again ". . . I am I fear a sad hand at your punctuation." Even a cursory examination of this captivating and erudite work, however, will demonstrate how the 19th century's most poetic of poets compensated for his grammatical and technical deficiencies by a superabundance of that spontaneous wit, irrepressible bravura, and convoluted genius which Peter Conrad has synthesized in his lapidary pronouncement: "He himself was his own masterpiece."

The personality of George Gordon Noel Byron, 6th Baron, was an idiosyncratic mixture of warring psychological factors and mercurial paradoxes, all of which manifest themselves in his voluminous correspondence with friends, lovers and literary acquaintances. Steeped in the enchantments of Romantic idealism, his nature was also tinged with a Calvinist hard-headedness and shrewd business acumen (he was Scottish by extraction and in early education), as evinced in his letters to Hanson and Murray. He seems to have been consistently anguished as well by the gulf that separates quotidian reality from the ideal. In this his predicament, one feels, was akin to Carlyle's later dilemma in striving to locate the nexus between historical theorizing and social activism. Such non sequiturs in Byron's inner environment display themselves in his capacity for modulating his tone and content to suit his correspondent. To Hobhouse, for example, he could be engagingly frank and charmingly disingenuous; to Murray, laconic, tense, businesslike; to his confidante Lady Melbourne, witty, savage, titillating. This facile, chameleonlike propensity for role switching must not be interpreted, however, as a sign of hypocrisy and superficiality. That virtually manic adaptability may have been engendered by an artistic craving for catholicity of expression. Sometimes he allows us a momentary glimpse of the terrible beast of loneliness that fed upon him: to Lady Melbourne he writes, "I would not trouble you but I have no other friend in town." Again, a tone of inchoate viciousness hisses through his comment to her regarding an affront to him by his spurned lover, Lady Caroline Lamb: ". . . If this is disregarded it will be out of my *power* to prevent consequences *fatal* to her. . . ." In writing to Lady Melbourne again, a sardonic allusion to his own aristocratic Scottish heritage (". . . all the bad blood in my own composition I derive from those bastards of Banquo . . .") is startlingly offset by the obsequiousness apparent in his note to Caroline, Princess of Wales: "I shall ever feel proud and happy in obeying any commands with which I may be honoured." At times, he splashes his scroll with phrases that could well have been salvaged from the smoke and fire of Carlyle's *French Revolution*: "We are just recovering from tumult and train oil, and transparent fripperies, and all the noise and nonsense of victory" (to Thomas Moore, referring to Wellington's victory at Vitoria on June 21, 1813). At other times, he evokes images that seem almost to sway and lurch from the pages of Dylan Thomas' *Under Milk Wood*: "All green-room and taproom—drams and the drama—brandy, whisky-punch, and *latterly*, toddy, overflow. . . ." (to Thomas Moore). The self-doubt which persistently bedeviled him: "I am a fool and deserve all the ills I have met . . ." (to Augusta Leigh)

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is counterbalanced by gloating over his role of Regency roué and diabolical dandy: "Lady Westmoreland . . . conceives me to be the greatest Barbarian since the days of Bacchus & Ariadne . . ." (to Lady Melbourne). Yet throughout his correspondence, with its crisscrossed agglomerations of mood, madness and melody, one role is dominant: that of Byron the poet.

And Byron's poetry, with its thrilling complex of driving rhythms, pulsating sexual energy and thematic fecundity, surges through his letters with Dionysian intensity. It is almost as if his private correspondence supplied us with a synthesis of the variegated elements which figure in his public works: the satiric realism of *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*; the brooding remorse, guilt and despair resonant in *Manfred* and in the 3rd and 4th Cantos of *Childe Harold*; the emotional mobility throughout *Don Juan* (described elsewhere by Byron as "a versified Aurora Borealis"); the generosity of his *Vision of Judgment*; the exotic heroism of *Sardanapalus*; the religious skepticism of *Cain* (which prompted Goethe to comment that Byron's true vocation was to dramatize the Old Testament); and the convergence of guilt and exultation marshaled into the stanzas of the *Giaour* and *The Bride of Abydos*.

His letters also demonstrate how the ambiguities and contradictions that were intertwined in his personality were the very things that gave that personality its epic dimensions. It was Lady Blessington who first commented that this array of inconsistent emotional and psychological strata in Byron's character in effect provided the leitmotif of his genius. One reads his letters with the distinct and disturbing feeling that when he describes man in *Manfred* as being "half dust, half deity, alike unfit to sink or soar," the words are as applicable to his own destiny as to that of his fictional hero. And in many ways Byron might be regarded as poetry's fictional hero, groveling in the dust of his own foibles while striving to attain a creative apotheosis through his preternatural art.

When Hermann Bahr, referring to German Expressionism, said that ". . . we must have a mixture of brutality and cunning—wild and sudden. . ." he might well have been invoking the very spirit of Byron's passion, acutely and painfully manifested in his letters and journals. And when Goethe, in his *Conversations with Eckermann*, suggests that "Lord Byron is only great as a poet; as soon as he reflects, he is a child," he conveys the essence of all that can be said about him. Professor Marchand's masterly editions of the poet's letters and journals, far from exploding whatever cultic legends may have enshrouded Byron's reputation in times past, in a very real sense honor the poet by enhancing the cult and perpetuating the legend. For it seems that only by extolling Byron as a divine myth can we effectively ensnare the reality of his demoniac genius. □

Is It the Policy or the System?

THE PERMANENT WAR ECONOMY: American Capitalism in Decline. *By Seymour Melman. Simon and Schuster. 384 pp. $9.95.*

BERT COCHRAN

Now come the dog days. Cassandra and Jeremiah emerge from their long seclusion. By all appearances they will not soon depart. Why should they? Some two dozen of our most renowned economists from universities, industrial corporations and banks have recently put on a public exhibition of intellectual bankruptcy that brings to mind the performance of Herbert Hoover and his supporting cast of wise men.

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Few realized when the Keynesians recruited President Nixon to their faction that their triumph was like the light of a star that shines most brilliantly when it is already extinct. Not that the Keynesians will now shamefacedly depart from our midst. On the contrary. But the current crisis has rocked their vaunted expertise. The wounds that the "money managers" absorbed, which may not seem serious to many of them as yet, have started a flow of blood that will not be quickly staunched.

For the past quarter-century it has been orthodox doctrine that the ideas of Keynes and his disciples had furnished governments with the monetary and fiscal tools to overcome stagnation and keep unemployment down to "acceptable" levels. What gave the gospel its ring of authority was the impressive postwar record of the capitalist industrial powers: continuous growth, increasing affluence—with periodic declines reduced to short-lived, shallow recessions. All this resulted in a measure of social tranquillity; while the depth and extent of class peace in the Western states was exaggerated by the boomers and promoters, it was notable when set against the internal convulsions of the period between the two World Wars. And the United States—the leader and banker of the entire enterprise—was lighting the path to an era of further progress and prosperity.

Critics were pointing out that all was not sweetness and light. There was far more unemployment and underemployment than was reported in official statistics. There was growing unused manufacturing capacity. There was a reckless ravaging of the resources upon which industrial society depends. Beyond these and other disturbing re-creations of the 1920s scene was the new phenomenon of the postwar era: the creation of the military Moloch who consumed a tenth of our national product and deformed the entire economy. The average Keynesian was undisturbed—grumblers and perfectionists we always have with us. Whatever his private feelings about the arms race, he thought government spending, regardless of purpose, was the feature of market management that assured a satisfactory economic performance.

By now it is history that the postwar world the dollar built collapsed in August 1971 when Nixon went off gold redemption. Once the European banks abandoned the dollar as the world reserve currency, the imposing structure built at Bretton Woods fell apart. American deficits, beginning with those connected with enlarged military budgets at the time of the Korean War, first ignited a boom both at home and abroad. Toward the end of the 1960s, the world "dollar gap" had turned into the "dollar glut." Beneath the façade of enrichment and economic miracles, the United States was piling up deficits year after year in its balance of payments because of the cost of its overseas establishments, military aid handouts and the policy of propping up of strongmen in client states. In 1971, our adverse net liquidity balance hit $22 billion; the federal deficit in that year rose to $18.4 billion, more than 50 per cent greater than the previous record high of 1968.

There are a number of causes for the raging inflation, not excluding the general inflationary tendency of a price-administered economy. But future writers will list as high among the causes of this inflation the flood of dollars that

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continues to inundate the "free world." The United States exported inflation in the 1960s, and from 1968, was itself increasingly overwhelmed by the dollar deluge. From its being an unhealthy state of affairs, like that of a business firm keeping up a prosperous front by means of slippery speculations, it has degenerated into a position of crisis—as if that business firm were to see its major speculations fail. The Keynesian medicine men who claimed to have discovered the formula for the tradeoff between unemployment and inflation are now revealed as sorcerer's apprentices who have presided over the production of unacceptable levels of both.

While Professor Melman does not address himself primarily to the current "stagflation" in his latest book, his exposition of the permanent war economy provides a better starting point to determine what has gone wrong than the lucubrations of authorities whose be-all and end-all is juggling with interest and tax rates. This book provides the best statement of the thesis that Melman has been developing over the last ten years. The war economy, as he sees it, took shape as a military-industrial complex during the long period of the cold war, to be transformed under the Kennedy-McNamara regime into a full-fledged, centrally managed state capitalist sector. It evolved into a separate economy, dominating and directing tens of thousands of companies of a new kind. It was not just an adjunct to the regular economy but a colossus bestriding it. In 1971, the military element represented three-quarters of the $97 billion of all federal government purchases; military installations and materiel amounted to 38 per cent of the total money value of all assets of U.S. industry; the military dominated and channeled the country's research and development.

What is new and different about the military contractor is that he operates under a set of principles that reverses the rules of the traditional business corporation: he maximizes costs—and maximizes subsidies from the state. This does not represent an occasional overreaching on the part of this or that cabal of company executives. It is an integral feature of the military economy that stems from patterned modes of behavior. Until the 1960s, final prices of major military-industry projects averaged 3.2 times higher than initial estimates. As of June 1971, cost overruns for that fiscal year on forty-five major weapons systems were $35 billion—this is not the cost of the weapons systems, but the additional cost over the amount originally contracted for. What is going on?

GOD: A WORD

I'm hard put:
the cloud by day,
the fire by night,
the voice from outer space.
Even the shower of gold.
You are not to be embraced,
most transparent of ghosts.
You come like a knocking,
like sun through lids.
I become light
with Being as you.

Etta Blum

As against civilian manufacturing, where for every 100 production workers there are thirty-six administrative, technical and clerical workers, in five major military industries the overhead rate is seventy. In the three highest—ordnance, communications equipment and aircraft—it ranges from seventy-nine to eighty-eight. Engineers are employed on a lavish scale. They are often recruited in lots of hundreds and even thousands by a single firm. Complexity in product design is often pursued for its own sake. Work projects are invented to fill in time because management wants to stockpile engineers in anticipation of a future contract award. "One of the consistent themes among product developers is 'Who cares about the cost?' If the product is more complex, it costs more and justifies a higher price; all this is called 'gold plating' in the trade." And it should not be assumed that astronomical costs insure superb products. According to a 1972 Congressional analysis, since 1955 more than $4 billion was spent on twenty-eight systems that were junked before deployment, and some $19 billion on fifteen other systems abandoned after they had been deployed. A total of $40 billion was spent on thirteen major aircraft and missile programs, but less than 40 per cent of these yielded an acceptable electronic performance.

But the managers of military industry suffer none of the usual consequences of high costs and Byzantine mismanagement. Inflated rates are accepted placidly by our Pentagon bursars. When some managements succeed in running their companies on the rocks, a big-hearted government can be called upon to rally round. Under the terms of Public Law 85-804, and Eisenhower's enabling Executive Order 10789, a firm once designated "essential to national defense" may be placed on a high-class dole. From 1958 to 1973, the government launched 3,652 rescue missions at a charge of $86 million. This did not include the most generous of them all, the recent $250-million underwriting of bank loans to the Lockheed Corporation.

Melman scoffs at the proposal to nationalize the military sector as the way to eliminate waste and looting of the treasury. So far as he is concerned, that sector of industry is already substantially nationalized. Final decision making on all essential matters, getting capital, determining the product to be manufactured, and determining the quantity, mode of production, price and distribution, are all decided by top management at the Defense Department. A vast bureaucracy, directing 20,000 industrial divisions, acts as the effective overlord of this military-industrial empire. Although the Pentagon owns a lot of the land, buildings and machinery, it exercises authority chiefly through control rather than through legal title. In the symbiotic relationship that has developed between state managers and corporation managers, it is the state managers who have the upper hand and the final say. (Melman's argument runs thin here. A question of this nature cannot be answered by reference to administrative jurisdiction or formal authority. The question is subsumed, in reality, under the larger problem of whether the power elite is an interlocking directorate of economic, political and military aristocracies, or whether it is in the grip of one or another of these.) Hence, Melman argues that unless the character and criteria of management conduct are drastically altered, a formal change of ownership would serve only as a pious fraud. It would guarantee continued subsidies for the perpetuation of sick, abused, ill-managed enterprises, as happened in the case of the Lockheed Corporation and Penn Central.

Many who are aware of the colossal waste in military contracting are convinced nonetheless that on balance the Pentagon imperium is both necessary and beneficial; not just as an instrument of arcane international policy but on straight economic grounds. It is true, they say, that spending billions of dollars for missiles, planes and systems that have no consumer value and become obsolescent in five years, is like dumping tons of milk in the river or burning acres of wheat. However, it keeps the economy afloat, gives people jobs, increases the national product. It is at this point that Melman's thesis shows its cutting edge, for he marshals important data to demonstrate that the war economy has been, in fact, the generator of industrial malformation and price inflation. He shows that instead of pepping up the economy, even if in a horrendously wasteful way, it led to the decay of our industrial establishment.

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When some nine-tenths of federally sponsored research funds were gobbled up by the military and space programs —accounting for well over half of all research and development investment— the greatest scientific and engineering talents were inevitably drawn into the military maw. With obvious results: the United States began to fall behind the Common Market countries and Japan in industrial design and bear higher costs for many civilian products. Furthermore, based on the calculations of Bruce Russett at Yale, Melman claims that because of military diversions the American economy was shortchanged from 1946 to 1973 by $660 billion, representing 45 per cent of what was actually spent on new capital investment. It is this deprivation, he thinks, that explains the decline in productivity gains, and the historical reversal of positions between the United States on one hand and Western Europe and Japan on the other. For eighty years, our rate of productivity growth exceeded Europe's by 60 per cent and Japan's by 70 per cent; by 1950 the relationship was turned around, and since 1965, U.S. rates have trailed Western Europe's by 60 per cent and Japan's by 84 per cent. The relative capital neglect was to have a blighting effect on one industry after another. Symbolic of the declining position was the loss in 1972 of world leadership in the machine-tool industry. The year before, when our trade balance went into the debit column for the first time since 1893, the United States was importing, and had been for a decade, billions of dollars of high technology goods. At home, services that had been technologically perfected long ago—telephone, railroads, electric power generating—were deteriorating or breaking down.

When Melman warms to his theme, his habit of attributing all manner of predicaments to the war machine, while cluttering the discussion with sometimes inconclusive statistical information, has the effect of blurring the next part of his design. Melman's argument turns into outright faulty reasoning when he suggests that American capital exports represented a vote of no confidence in "the economic viability of investment in the United States," and declares as well that the $31 billion export of capital in the 1960s represented a loss of 4 million jobs for American workers. The problem of stagnation cannot be tackled in this way. Melman should have considered many other elements in the mix, such as: (*1*) There was no dearth of available funds for investment since profit inflow on foreign investments in 1950-72 exceeded the outflow, and great sums went for monetary and commodity speculation. (*2*) Corporation profits at home went up in the same period, but the 15 per cent idle manufacturing capacity in 1960-70 slowed new capital commitments. (*3*) Decisions of multinational corporations to let certain home operations run down while concentrating on manufacturing in their plants abroad, or exploiting foreign markets, are only remotely related to the war economy; they originate from the multinationals' ability to shift production dextrously across boundaries so as to take advantage of tax and trade laws, and exploit regional labor and business hungers. (*4*) The unloading on the government of railroads that were systematically looted and bankrupted, and the neglect of mass transportation in favor of the automobile, are illustrations of the asocial, fast-profit proclivities that antedate the military economy. If military expenditures were reduced in such a way as to make an additional $20 billion or $30 billion available for investment, there is a strong presumption that much of this would go into speculative ventures and to swell capital exports rather than for investments to rehabilitate depleted and less profitable industries.

In a word, what is called for on this count is a better integrated analysis of why a capitalist economy tends to run down periodically, why massive military injections, after ballooning the economy while twisting it out of shape, were ultimately inappropriate for shoring it up against the slump.

Having seen his decade-long campaign of exposure, argument and reason fail to change the course of events, Melman is now in a sober mood. He understands that there are no quick, sure-fire political solutions. He realizes that the bonds of an accepted ideology harness people to the war economy. He is aware that powerful interests are resolved to maintain existing arrangements. What he pins his faith on is that "the ongoing deterioration in economy and society due to the war economy can eventually evoke self-preservation instincts among enough people to produce a political challenge." As a prophecy it is too subdued, as a hope it is too restrained, with reference to a society that is now in serious trouble. One does not have to endorse Robert Heilbroner's lugubrious, neo-Spenglerian warnings that the jig is up for industrial civilization to realize that a storm is heading in our direction. We are in the opening stage of a systemic crisis, and before the crisis will have run its course, some familiar landmarks will have disappeared. The postwar Augustan era has ended. The era of the political migration of nations and peoples has begun. □

The Author of Cheri

THE EVENING STAR. *By Colette. Translated from the French by David Le Vay. Bobbs-Merrill Co. 144 pp. $5.95.*

GLYNNE HILLER

Colette is known best in this country as a novelist, the creator of *Chéri*, *Claudine* and *Gigi*. But during her more than half-century of work, from 1900 to 1951, she also produced a rich harvest of nonfiction: autobiographical prose, essays, letters, articles. And it is to these writings as much as to her novels that Colette owes her rare dual status. In France she is viewed by her countrymen as a sort of national emblem, and a postage stamp bearing her profile testifies that she is as valuable as any French possession. At the same time she belongs to the world of letters, occupying as unique a place there as Proust, one of her admirers.

Glynne Hiller, a native of England, is a lecturer in literature at Manhattanville College in Purchase, N.Y. A free-lance writer and editor, she is also author of two popular books for teen-agers.

One by one over the past years these subjective writings have made their way into the English language. Hurrah then for the newest in the constellation, *The Evening Star*, translated by David Le Vay, a man who is as sensitive to Colette as he is to language.

For the first time in her life Colette is writing about whatever she pleases. There are no pressures, no deadlines. But she has had to take along with her her tools, the famous pale blue sheets of paper and fountain pens, aboard her "raft," a divan bed straddled by desk and shelves from which she can look out of her Paris window. Crippled by arthritis, she can no longer walk.

In the autumn of her life, Colette's stories are like dappled woods. They are filled with surprises. There's the story of a once demi-mondaine who says she destroyed all her old love letters because they gave rise to a thousand irritations. But she kept one, she confides, winking ". . . her little old lady's eye which still shone with the color of a great sapphire." To Colette's remark that it must have been a very beautiful letter,

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the woman replies, " 'For me. I know it by heart. Shall I tell it to you?' . . . She let her gaze, not devoid of majesty, wander over her well-kept gardens . . . and recited: 'The key will be hanging behind the shutter.' "

Colette knows how to establish a comfortable intimacy, how to share a confidence with the reader, and she effortlessly connects the past with today by her own overlying presence. Her own purrs of pleasure, tremors of pain, or growls of approval are never far off. Neither are those acute comments of an author who cannot help watching herself watching.

Recollections are not normally made in chronological order, and Colette bobs back and forth in time, the style catching the mood of the moment, moving from the journalistic to the lyrical. A vivid immediacy surrounds the things she writes of, even though they have happened a long time ago. A technique Colette often uses to achieve this effect is to link animal traits both to things and to human beings. For example, writing of the April snow on the day of her last marriage, she says, "The wild honeysuckle of Vaux-de-Cernay held it piled on its new little ears, and the water rushing from the springs was like the blue of a snake." American airplanes over France are described as "The fish flying in the deepening night." And her own newborn has "nails . . . resembling in their transparency the convex scale of the pink shrimp."

What a caravan of people we meet in these memoirs, including her dearest friends, Germaine Beaumont, Hélène Picard—the poet—and one Colette calls "the best of all friends," her third husband. Readers will not forget Renée of the Palais Royale who wore no make-up to indicate her profession, and after being sent to Munich by the Germans during the war, returned to Paris with a limp, and fingers that looked like clams.

But there are light sketches, too: an eccentric exhibitionist in the Bois de Boulogne; a clairvoyant who took up with a *curé* for a while, and during that time lost her powers to "see in the candle." The vignettes of her colleagues at *Le Matin* are unbeatable for sheer fun. Colette worked for this newspaper for more than twelve years. Varilla, its ruler, is "tall as three apples," and he also sponsors pharmaceutical products which he insists on testing out on the entire staff. Duvernois is the man to whom Colette owes her habit of writing on blue paper. "White paper rasps the retina," he cried from his worktable, which was lacquered and "as large as a skating rink . . . and just as slippery." A rich friend of many on *Le Matin*, "Louis-Louis . . seemed slow, yet moved with ease and speed, concealed his gaze behind louvred eyelids." The image Colette retains of him that is the "most familial and the least human" occurs when he takes her to see his magnificent town house on the Left Bank, and shows her what he likes best in it.

> He threw open a door, brusquely lit up a white room. He sat down on a narrow bed, grasped a plait of hair, which he employed to lift and brandish before us the face of a very young girl fresh and blooming from sleep.
>
> "My daughter," he said.
>
> "But Louis," I protested, "you'll frighten her!"
>
> "Frighten her? Do you think I have nervous children? They're used to it."
>
> And, in fact, the long calm eyelids barely lifted over two blue eyes, and the young girl returned to the depths of her dreams. Her father behaved likewise to a brown-haired lad.
>
> The heavy confident paw that grasped and flung back these infant heads balanced its weight of paternal pride and despotism. This is how the wild animal behaves, which plays and roughly handles its offspring at will.

At the time of writing this book, Colette was a veteran of pain as well as joy. Still there are no cries or laments here. She once said, "Is suffering so very serious? It may be quite childish . . . a sort of undignified pastime." On page one she reiterates this: "If we are to be shaped by night-time, it's as well to accept it."

Again here, as in all of her *oeuvre*, are repeated the themes of nature, love, work, and above all, the dialogue between creatures. For Colette there exists only one creature: plant, animal, human being all live. She believes that to abide in this world for a few decades is a blessing because it is a chance to look for a long time at whatever pleases you.

And there remains much to delight the still arrowy senses of Colette, the septuagenarian. Her grown-up daughter's mouth that looks "like a little pot of strawberries"; the mist at dawn in her room that makes the membranes of her nose moist as a dog's; the first flower on top of the chestnut tree "pink as a roofing tile."

Then too there is a parade of afternoon visitors that includes a pair of 9-month-old twins "downy as two peaches," a grave 3-year-old who plays with words like "ornithorhynchus" and "Trochilidae"; a parrot, Anatole, with a judicious gaze and a relentless resemblance to Offenbach. Again, there is always the arrival of "her best of all friends" who will continue to hold her hand, and lay on her cheek his own rough one shaven at dawn.

Even her pain is a "rhythm of twinges and waves" that she can "capitalize musically as one does the pistons of a train." But perhaps her deepest satisfaction is her memories, avalanches of riches culled from a life that held many careers, friends, liaisons, prestige, love, three husbands and two wars. And because Colette has a lot to remember, the images flow and the pace is steady. Neither she nor we can forget the time when on tour in the Midi in a ferocious heat, she stops her cab and rushes down a slope to sit fully clothed in the river below, "her linen skirt ballooning in the water . . . crowned with heavy green-black dragon flies."

Like Proust, Colette was an artist of the senses. But while Proust pursued sensory perception to bring back the feelings of childhood, Colette wanted sensation intrinsically, for itself, to be able to touch its keenest edge. But she also wanted to feel to the fullest in order that she could write accurately about it.

For writing is an old habit with Colette, now after fifty-three years of sitting down each day at her desk in disciplined fashion. Yet she confides how elusive it all can be. "I don't always enjoy myself. I may be engaged an entire night in pursuing a fragment of conversation, a name, a word, which are not even helpful to my work." Or later on, "Within me a tired mind continues with its gourmet's search, looks for a better word, and better than better."

It would be understandable if when writing one's memoirs one were to fall sentimental. It never happens here. Colette can be counted upon to shun the obvious.

Simone Weil once said, "We really possess nothing on this earth but the power to say 'I.' " Surely no one understood this as well as Colette. □

IN THE WINTER OF TIGERS

In the winter of tigers,
after the zoo closes, the sun
smokes and thins out, seeds
leap from an apple's core,
wheat whispers loudly
to the earth, to startled snow.
A crow plummets
through the calm sky
like a black parachute
that never opens.

In the middle of winter, the tigers
walk up the snowy mountains
and spread out with the snow,
until there is only snow and tigers,
and the memories of tigers,
invisible against the snow.

Tom McKeown

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When the Kissing Has to Stop

A TIME TO CHOOSE: America's Energy Future. *Energy Policy Project of the Ford Foundation. Ballinger Publishing. Co. 511 pp. $12.95. Paper $4.95.*

C. W. GRIFFIN

Ignoring the incumbent politician's strategy of not mentioning your opponent, Mobil Oil Corp. launched a multimillion-dollar propaganda campaign denouncing the Ford Foundation's energy policy report. In formulating its final recommendations, the foundation researchers had the effrontery to reject the troglodyte views of Mobil's president, William P. Tavoulareas, a member of the project's advisory board. That meant war, and Mobil has subsequently fought on the beaches, in the air, in newspapers, in magazines—any place where a few well-placed millions of federally subsidized media expenditures might have some effect. In these "public-service" messages Mobil denounces the Ford researchers' modest proposal for a national energy-conservation campaign. Mobil urges us to mount a huge national effort to increase energy supplies regardless of the ecological cost. This effort will, Mobil admits, require more federal tax favors for the oil companies. But, you must understand, those who already appear to be gorging themselves at the federal trough are in reality selflessly dedicated to helping others. In Mobil's words: "Simply giving the poor a better life and maintaining a healthy economy will require more energy."

Judged by the negative logic of W.C. Fields's dictum, "Any man who hates dogs and children can't be all bad," the Ford Foundation report must be on the right track; no report that made enemies like Mobil could be all bad. In fact, the report is pretty good. It confronts the central fact about the energy crisis: that it differs from the other crises that periodically rouse the nation. The energy crisis is a super crisis, a mortal threat to the world economy and to the industrial nations' commitment to continued prosperity and rising living standards. We are spending our energy capital like drunken sailors on extended shore leave, consuming our fossil fuel reserves at roughly 10 million times their natural rate of creation. And nothing on the technological horizon offers reasonable hope of rescuing us from overwhelming dependence on fossil fuels (petroleum, coal, and natural gas) before the year 2000. Accordingly, the Ford Foundation researchers reject, as totally impracticable, a continuation of our historic energy consumption growth of 3.4 per cent, a rate that has held over the past two decades.

In place of the "historic-growth" pattern, they propose a national policy based on one of two possible alternatives: either an intermediate, 2 per cent annual growth rate, or a "zero" growth rate, which, some time in the 1990s, would stabilize our total national energy consumption at an annual level of 100 quadrillion Btu's, 10 per cent above current per capita consumption.

Unfortunately, there are sound reasons for doubting that even these concessions are enough. While experts debate whether energy consumption should rise by 5 per cent or 2 per cent a year, U.S. energy consumption actually declined in 1974. Oil consumption, which accounts for nearly half the total, dropped by about 3 per cent. Industry experts attribute this decline to the involuntary consumption limits set by the Arab oil embargo, which artificially reduced consumption during the first part of the year. According to this theory, the oil embargo was an extraordinary event that should not be counted for the purposes of long-range planning and projection.

That assumption, however, may be the fatal flaw in the theory. It may be unrealistically optimistic to assume that we have such control over our destiny. To attain that degree of control would require more drastic remedies than the Ford Foundation recommends. Skyrocketing energy prices could drive us into a painful, unplanned consumption pattern possibly less than the Ford Foundation's "zero-growth" scenario. The Ford Foundation underestimates the tremendous scope of U.S. energy waste and its depressing effect on the national and world economies.

The power utilities' plight best exemplifies the general problem. Perennially the fastest growing sector of the energy industry and the most important to our economic future, the power utilities may be headed for financial disaster. They are caught in an apparently hopeless squeeze between consumer pressures for cheap energy and rising fuel and construction costs. Against such threats, the Ford Foundation proposals, though excellent as far as they go, appear too timid and respectful of the *status quo*.

The foundation report fails most notably in its feeble response to the automotive problem, the crux of the energy crisis. Professor Robert E. Stobaugh, of the Harvard Business School's Energy Policy Project, aptly calls U.S. gasoline consumption the "hemorrhage of the world oil system." Overpowered U.S. motor vehicles annually consume some 100 billion gallons of fuel, nearly half our total petroleum consumption. Automobiles waste energy for largely nonproductive purposes. A commuting motorist who drives a daily 15 miles each way in heavy traffic uses about three times as much energy getting to and from work as he uses *at* work. In contrast, a typical New York City subway commuter uses a negligible amount of energy, about 2 to 5 per cent as much as a commuting motorist. Moreover, the motorist is heavily subsidized (possibly at the rate of $1,000 a year). Public policy thus encourages him to persist in his energy-wasting habits, through a host of tax favors and subsidy programs. (As merely one example, a salesman can depreciate the cost of an energy-wasting Cadillac in three years, a $1,500 annual federal gift to someone in the 50 per cent tax bracket.) This tremendous waste reduces the oil supply and bids up costs for petrochemicals and fuel needed for more important uses—to heat homes and commercial buildings, to run construction equipment, to generate electricity.

In short, the American motorist bears prime responsibility for our $25-billion oil imports deficit. Continued indefinitely, this dollar drain could topple the already precarious financial structure of the world economy, precipitating a worldwide depression on the scale of the 1930s.

Drastically reduced gasoline consumption—say 10 per cent annually over the next few years—offers our best hope of averting economic depression. It also provides a crucial test. If we can't summon the resolution to curb the commuting motorists' energy-wasting habits, forcing significant numbers to ride mass transit, form car pools, or, if necessary, to move closer to their jobs, then we shall inevitably fail to control other energy wasters—industry, speculative builders, private fliers and the like.

The Ford Foundation report fails dismally to confront this crucial challenge. Instead of a gasoline tax increase, which reduces consumption immediately, the Ford Foundation follows the sentimentalists who call the gasoline tax "regressive." The foundation researchers call for minimum fuel economy performance standards, designed to mandate average fuel economy of 20 miles per gallon by 1985. We simply can't wait that long for econ-

C.W. Griffin is the author of Taming the Last Frontier *(Pitman Publishing Corp.) and* Energy Conservation in Buildings *(Construction Specifications Institute).*

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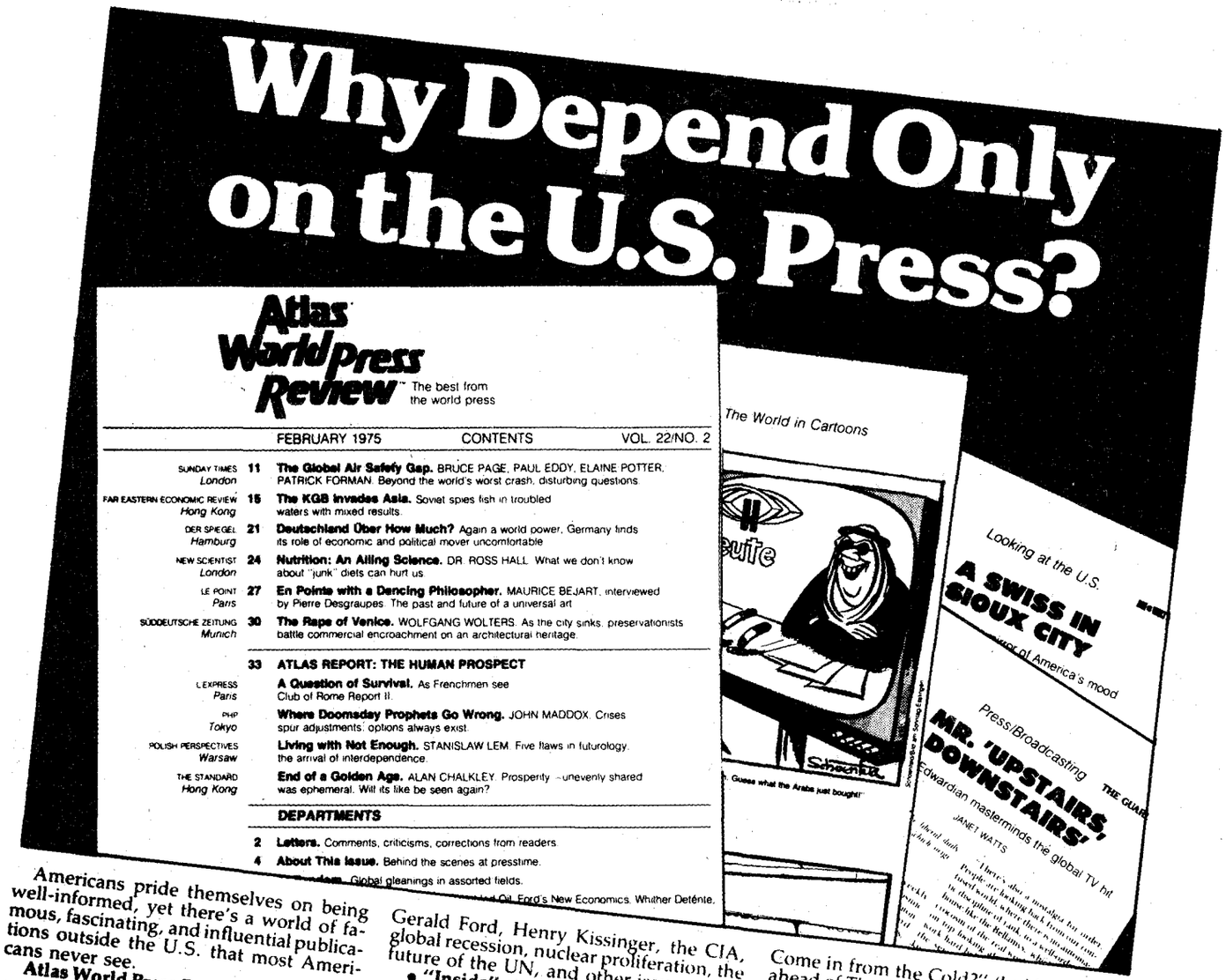

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A SWISS IN SIOUX CITY

Press/Broadcasting

MR. 'UPSTAIRS, DOWNSTAIRS'

Edwardian masterminds the global TV hit

JANET WATTS

Americans pride themselves on being well-informed, yet there's a world of famous, fascinating, and influential publications outside the U.S. that most Americans never see.

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omies achieved much faster through tax policy.

Admittedly, a 20¢-to-50¢ gasoline tax increase would cause painful readjustments in American society. But there is no painless way to cope with the energy crisis. We have incurred a debt that has suddenly fallen due and the longer we delay, the higher the interest costs mount. A gasoline tax is *not* regressive, as is widely believed. If our President would read his own government's publications, he would learn different. Census reports indicate that commuting motorists earn from 35 per cent to 150 per cent more than transit riders in various U.S. cities. The Environmental Protection Agency reports that gasoline consumption increases *linearly* with income—i.e., that a 1 per cent increase in income brings a 1 per cent increase in gasoline consumption. The United States is the only major industrial nation that subsidizes its motorists. European governments are more solicitous of the poor; yet they tax their motorists heavily. A 50¢ federal gasoline tax, levied in 10¢ stages to cushion the shock, would enable us to reduce income taxes by $30 billion, a real boon to the poor. We could spend $10 billion a year on a crash program to increase transportation efficiency by 50 per cent within five years.

It is, indeed, as the Ford Foundation researchers entitled their report, a time to choose. It's too bad, after their $4-million study, that they couldn't bring themselves to do it. □

FILMS

ROBERT HATCH

An accommodating way to take Hal Ashby's *Shampoo* is as bawdy farce, a reductio ad pudendum of the mores of affluent America; subspecies, Southern California. George (Warren Beatty; he is also the producer) is the most fantastic hairdresser in Beverly Hills, but you are not to draw an inference from the adjective, though the film does solicit laughter from the anomaly of a hairdresser showing personal interest in his clients.

"Interest" is putting it discreetly—when he is not fluffing and shaping lovely heads at the beauty parlor, George is riding his motorbike on hurried house calls to hillside chalets, where he ministers to the clamorous needs of what I can only suppose are very sleek but very frigid women (or perhaps George is not that fantastic after all). He devours women like a health nut gulping vitamin powders, his priapic force being astonishing, but his ego requiring a dose of sex after meals to remain erect.

But calling the film a farce is perhaps too accommodating. That would require for merriment, I think, some element of rascally charm in George, and I could detect no trace of it. Indeed, despite his décolleté shirt revealing a grease-paint sunburn, his strings of beads and the hair dryer stuck in his waistband like a surrogate set of genitals, George of the hangdog eyes is a disgrace to the satyr breed. As he keeps dolorously telling us, assuming that we ought to care, he has quite failed at growing up. The ladies (Julie Christie, Goldie Hawn, Lee Grant), who are no fools except on the subject of George, quite see this deficiency in their stud, and at the end have gone their several ways, leaving him bereft and with no occasion to work the zipper on his jeans. But not for long, one assumes: there are new customers every day at the shampoo shop.

If not farce, then perhaps the film is satire. That supposition is encouraged by the fact that the events take place during the deplorable 1968 Nixon-Agnew election, and those two felonious hypocrites are to be seen and heard a good deal on various TV sets. The idea might be that political corruption is organically associated with the softening of moral fiber in the country at large. There is easy irony to be derived from recalling that Nixon and Agnew expressed great admiration for moral fiber, but the film works in vain to relate George and his dolls to the imminent soiling of the White House. The preoccupations of this very minute segment of alleged West Coast society cannot be shown to have promoted the fortunes of Nixon-Agnew (or vice versa). Erotic monomania is an old malady (more probably an old fiction) dating back to the Greeks and exemplified more recently by the gymnastic imaginings of the Marquis de Sade, John Cleland's *Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure* (Fanny Hill, she was) and long stretches of current paperbacks, themselves no more than an unblushing display of what has always sold beneath the counter. If the percentage of American women who lust after their hairdressers or other service employees is high enough to contribute significantly to a moral slump in the country, then it might be useful to satirize their bad taste by exaggerating it to an existence of endlessly repeated and inevitably aborted copulation under messy circumstances. But *Shampoo* does not establish the premise.

As a side issue, it offers Jack Warden in the role of a dishonest money juggler, who drives a Rolls-Royce with the radio always tuned to the Wall Street quotations and who is the husband of one of George's current bedmates and the lover of another. This jealous bull proves to be as gullible and befuddled, but nowhere near as lovable, as Oliver Hardy, Stan Laurel's fat friend. I found him too obvious a straw man to pass as a comment on American finance capital. And what special relevance the film might have is neutralized by the glossy, animated cartoon style of the acting. Li'l Abner strikes it rich.

So, I was not amused by *Shampoo* as farce, nor instructed by it as satire—neither pleasure nor profit, and I cannot join the claque. Rather, I was depressed by the expense of effort for the small residue of titillation. One thing I did notice—whenever Nixon or Agnew came on the TV tube, I tensed to attention: real evil is incalculably more commanding than any rich kid's fun and games that can be dreamed up by movie-mongers in search of a sexy gimmick to turn a buck. And, with the help of an unseemly lot of "with it" chatter, the bucks are turning.

Given the rancid violence that prevails on the screen, it may seem churlish to complain that Vittorio de Sica's final film is too sweet, but I can't believe that *A Brief Vacation* will contribute much to his lasting reputation. It is a Cinderella story, a common enough theme and one subject to a multitude of variations. Here it is projected straight, with tearful bravery, snatches of rueful happiness and passages of fairy-tale improbability.

Clara, the Cinderella (Florinda Bolkan), is chief breadwinner for a pack of "ugly sisters" consisting of a brutish husband, a parasitic brother-in-law, a dim-witted, greedy mother-in-law and three small children. She works in an inferno of a Milan factory which I suspect makes automobile tires, but whose only visible product is the misery of its employees. Tuberculosis ensues for Clara and the fairy godmother is the Italian National Health.

High in the mountains, in a sanatorium village that looks to be designed by Disney Studios with suggestions from the Trapp Family, she finds peace, companionship, warm appreciation, generosity. She grows beautiful (Florinda Bolkan is a beautiful woman), she is given elegant clothes by a rich fellow convalescent, she ministers to the hurt and despairing, reads Tolstoy, drinks champagne with an amiable Montgomery Clift sort of fellow (Daniel Quenaud) and toys with his idea that they run off together to West Germany. But then

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comes the dreaded day when her X-rays read clean—the clock strikes midnight and before you can say "pumpkin" she is on the train for Milan, with no glass slipper in prospect.

The film is not as bad as that outline might suggest because, as always, de Sica showed in it a respect for and amused understanding of human dignity and human foibles. You can laugh and sigh a good deal over Clara and her companions, but you can't escape (at least, I couldn't escape) the enervating knowledge that melancholy is being poured over you to no particular purpose. On a visit to the mountain, the husband threatens Clara with "I could kick your ass all the way back to Milan"; in a very delicate way, that is about what de Sica does to her.

The trouble with a picture like this is not that it is unreal; overlooking the more blatant ironies and extreme contrasts, introduced for dramatic facility, this sort of thing quite possibly happens much too often in life. But as theatre it won't work, because irreversible bad luck is not dramatically interesting. You need moral conflict, some ambiguity between good and evil, moments when personality, not the whim of the plot master, makes the decisions that count. And of these, *A Brief Vacation*, for all its externalized tenderness, has none. It is pretty to look at and nothing to remember.

Another sweet film, though in a grotesquely different world, is *Rafferty and the Gold Dust Twins*; I call it sweet because the principal characters are immune to the normal laws of cause and effect. It is a tale of nomadic rip-off artists, of which we had more than a few some years back; but since then we've been through a couple of assassinations, Watergate and stagflation, and are now trying to survive the obtuse truculence of an appointed President and the short-tempered arrogance of a holdover Secretary of State. The cute depredations of society's dropouts no longer sparkle with the charm that was claimed for them during the short summer of Haight-Ashbury.

I must admit that this judgment is more easily arrived at in retrospect than felt at the time, for *Rafferty* is a shrewd entertainment machine, put together and performed by obviously competent mechanics. Rafferty himself (Alan Arkin) is in his late 30s, retired from twenty years of drinking in the Marine Corps and working somnolently as an examiner for the California drivers' license bureau. One lunch hour in the park, a couple of girls, the older of whom may have reached the age of consent, kidnap him at gunpoint and order him to drive them to New Orleans in his circus caricature of a jalopy. Rafferty protests a bit, but he's a fellow who doesn't much care what he does or where he goes, as long as there's a pint bottle in the glove compartment (that's part of what I mean about cause and effect), and besides he soon becomes woozily interested in the sexier of his captors (Sally Kellerman) and amused by the younger, brighter and sulkier one (Mackenzie Phillips).

So off these three go, cheating, humiliating and frightening the squares, across the desert, through Las Vegas and down into the Deep South. On the way, Rafferty's affections switch from the lay-about blonde with the husky voice to the acned kid with the tight jeans who, it turns out, is in flight from a Catholic orphan asylum, and this adds a Lolita flavor to the tale (Rafferty eventually has to pose as her father before the oddly gullible nuns). Dick Richards directs the show hard and fast, fighting for laughs every mile of the road and getting quite a few—never mind how. At the end Rafferty and the kid are heading for Mexico. It's not porno, but more than a little itchy. □

A NOTE TO OUR READERS

from James J. Storrow Jr., Publisher

I am always proud when we at The NATION pinpoint a problem and much later, the rest of the media follow our lead.

A case in point is the remarkable article in our August 3, 1974 issue -- "The Hot River Valley". If you recall, it warned of the dangers of nuclear reactor plants in the Susquehanna Valley.

The papers now tell us that 23 nuclear plants have been closed because they were unsafe. NBC Television recently did a Special called "The Nuclear Threat and You". Editorial pages throughout the land are discussing the subject with new anxiety.

Our article, written by McKinley Olson, a former editor on The York (Pa.) Gazette and Daily, presented a probing description and analysis of the power struggle between atomic advocates and their opponents. Dr. John W. Gofman, a West Coast radiation expert, said it was "... just about the best ever written on the nuclear issue."

I heartily recommend our reprints of this incisive piece. If you belong to a study group, or an organization, or teach a class in Environment, it will be a valuable aid. Prices are:

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London

The two outstanding critical and box-office hits of the season here are Alan Ayckbourn's *The Norman Conquests* and Ibsen's *John Gabriel Borkman*. The former is, in fact, three full-length plays—*Table Manners, Living Together* and *Round and Round the Garden*—which are shown on separate evenings. One may see them in any order without a sense of incompleteness. One may see (and enjoy) all three—as I did—without complaining of monotony, though the same six actors appear each night.

The tripartite arrangement is a continuum. When a character leaves the stage in *Table Manners* and goes into the garden, what exactly happens there? We get the answer in *Round and Round the Garden*. When several people leave the garden, they come together again in *Living Together*. There is no onstage or offstage development: all the action is presented in one or another of the triptych's segments.

This amounts to a dramaturgic tour de force. Alan Ayckbourn's remarkable skill may be explained not only by reference to a natural aptitude for stagecraft but by the fact that he is the staff playwright of a provincial theatre for which he is obliged to furnish one or more scripts every season. It is an old theatre tradition.

The plays are brilliantly staged by Eric Thompson, who directed the same author's *Absurd Person Singular*, and acted by a perfect cast of which the star name is Tom Courtenay, though none of the others is in the least inferior to him.

The Norman Conquests is almost continuously funny. The source of humor is in the depiction of a middle middle class which has only one leg to stand on, and that on the unsteady ground of present-day England. The tone is one of affectionate banter, at which no one can take offense, although if the piece were viewed seriously it might be considered devastating.

There are two husband and wife couples: Norman and Ruth, Reg and Sarah. Reg and Ruth are also brother and sister and the couples have come down from London to visit an unmarried younger sister, Annie, who lives in the family home where she takes care of their ailing mother. Also there is Tom, a hilariously obtuse and inarticulate bachelor who, the visitors all hope, will propose to poor put-upon Annie, but who never does.

The husbands are without gumption and are therefore thoroughly henpecked —Reg by Sarah, who is middle-class propriety incarnate with a mania for order and cleanliness, and Norman by the rather acerbic, common-sense Ruth, who practically supports her no-account assistant librarian husband. He is an offbeat romantic crying out in vain for a more expansive freedom of behavior and expression than the mediocrity of his circumstances permits. He has a vivid sense of the ridiculous but no effective energy. He wants to make everyone happy, which he knows how to do only by making passes at all the family's women—including his own disillusioned wife, whom he both irritates and amuses. And there is delightful Annie, neglected, disheveled, uncomplaining though always on the verge of a horrendous outburst at the ineptitude of all the males in the environment. Left without the consolation of a virile embrace from any man, she ends forlorn and forgiving. Everyone willy-nilly makes do with an affable resignation though never altogether forgoing the relief of a sharp tongue. The dominating note, characteristic of the class represented, is a feckless and benevolent *patience*.

All this makes for endearing entertainment. But I was assured by several of my English friends that the play is more than a pleasant pastime. There is an underlying sadness in it, I was told. I wondered if I had missed the play's "point," its sharp edge, because of insufficient familiarity with the local background. Perhaps, but John Weightman (a good critic) in his review of the play in *Encounter* speaks of its "metaphysical void" and thinks *Absurd Person Singular* better than *The Norman Conquests*. If I don't agree with this it may be because the American cast of *Absurd Person Singular* pushes so hard to make its effects, and works each for his or herself, while the actors of *The Norman Conquests* constitute an admirable ensemble.

John Gabriel Borkman, written when Ibsen was 68, is the last but one of his plays. It dramatizes one of the recurrent and most significant of Ibsen's themes: the sacrifice of a man's emotional life to the demands of his career. In *When We Dead Awaken*, a sculptor has given up everything for his art—with a consequent flaw even in that. In *Borkman* love is sacrificed to the lust for power. Both men suffer from "a coldness of the heart." Both have killed love in the woman they most cared for, women who loved them. And in doing this they cripple their souls.

"I wanted all the sources of power in the country to serve me," Borkman says. "The earth, the mountains, the forests, the sea. So that I might create a kingdom for myself, and prosperity for thousands and thousands of others." This is very much like something our robber barons might have said if they had had the lyric force with which Ibsen endows Borkman. Indeed I find a very "American" resonance in the details of Borkman's story.

The banker Borkman had embezzled his depositors' money and been sent to prison for it. After his release, his wife vows never to see him again. When she is reproved for this she defends herself by saying, "Didn't he tell the court that I had started him on the road to ruin? That I spent too much money?" When asked if there was not some truth in the accusation, she replies, "But he wanted it that way! He wanted everything to be so absurdly luxurious. . . . He always said we had to 'put on a show.' He put on a show all right! . . . Made people bow and scrape to him, the way they would to a king." Borkman dies of "a hand of iron" (or of "ice") which grips his heart.

John Gabriel Borkman has all Ibsen's severe realism, coupled with that almost epic loftiness of feeling especially marked in his later work. There is in it a classic compression of structure which leads to a certain artificiality toward the end and mars the otherwise immaculate purity of the whole. But it is still a magnificent play. Edvard Munch called it "the most powerful winter landscape in Scandinavian art."

Peter Hall's National Theatre production is painless. He has directed it as romanticized melodrama. This creates some striking moments; it holds one's interest and is occasionally picturesque. There is a softness about it, a veil of stage glamour which dissolves the play's granite. Ralph Richardson, as Borkman, made up to look like Strindberg in the famous portrait of him which still hangs in Ibsen's study in Oslo, becomes here a figure of romance. His fine voice vibrates in a histrionic manner which diminishes the grim stature of the character and the play. Wendy Hiller as Mrs. Borkman attitudinizes and does not heed Ibsen's injunction that the woman must be shown, for all her rigor, to love her husband. Peggy Ashcroft as Borkman's true love gives the simplest performance, and I took special pleasure in Anna Carteret as Mrs. Wilton, the lady who captures Borkman's son, and in Alan Webb as Borkman's last remaining friend. But it may be that it is just those defects I have noted in the production which, apart from the great worth of the play, have largely contributed to its signal success. □

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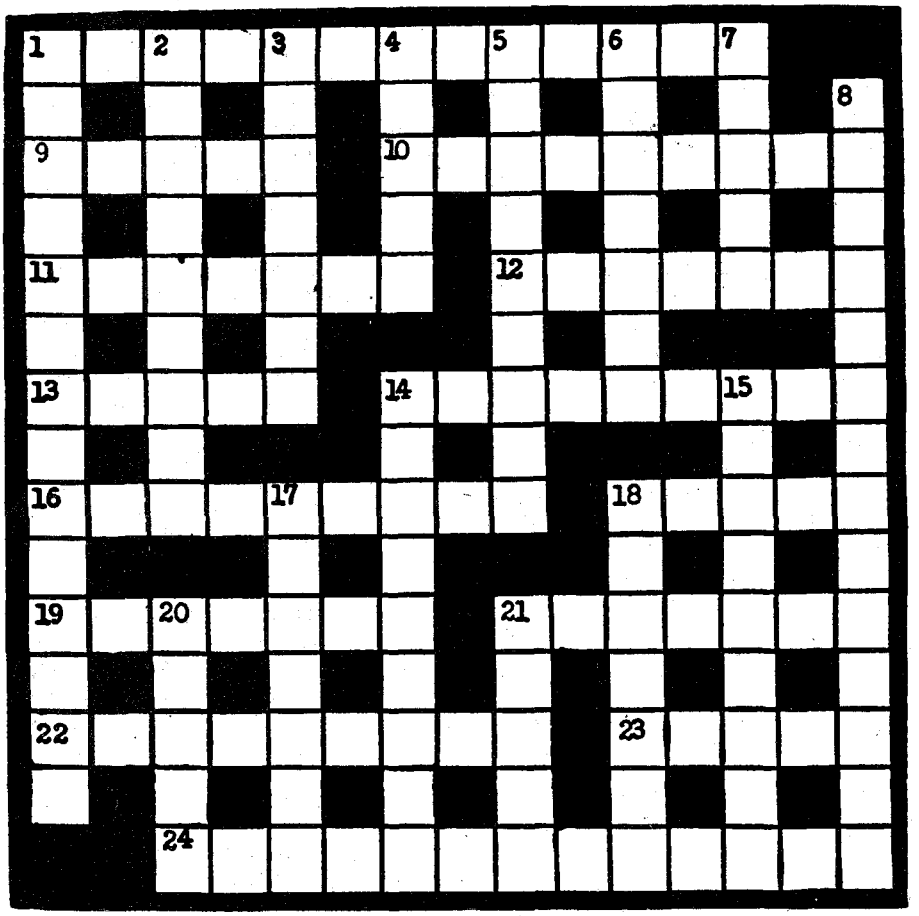
Crossword Puzzle No. 1575

FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS

1 A fire might be. (5,3,5)
9 and 10 Where to put the glove you're holding is not of primary consideration. (2,3,5,4)
11 How they cry just before play! (2,5)
12 Does it look bad for a spell? (4,3)
13 Toughen by exercise. (5)
14 Steering out of this might be a cause for lamenting. (9)
16 5 results. (9)
18 It's comparatively certain it might make us err. (5)
19 Glut. (7)
21 A battering ram pushes a killer inside. (7)
22 Thinks about the minus rate of exchange. (9)
23 Proving the dog star is just another planet? (5)
24 March past with this? (It's possible to be taken in, then.) (5,5,3)

DOWN

1 One isn't really sorry to drop one or two! (9,5)
2 A setting of the sun put off when it's passing, at least. (2,2,5)
3 Move up. (7)
4 Proving there's nothing above the belt of fresh air, colloquially. (5)
5 Having icing made from 16? (9)
6 Charge resulting in a fall, by the sound of it. (7)
7 General name for a failing grade made around it. (5)
8 *Huckleberry Finn* or *Tom Sawyer*, according to the titles. (9,5)
14 Bengali men talk about food, you can see! (9)
15 Over-weight priest and poet. (4,5)
17 His is probably not a quick examination. (7)
18 Is this cutter in operation? (7)
20 The school of such as 21 across, leading to a degree—probably in Classic Literature. (5)
21 On the surface, it might be a base for art work. (5)

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 1574

ACROSS: 1 Encouraged; 6 and 24 Portends; 10 Errands; 11 Praline; 12 Ties; 13 Frangipani; 15 Intoned; 16 English; 17 Instant; 20 Corncob; 22 Young ideas; 23 Peri; 25 Imperil; 26 Gondola; 27 Lids; 28 Grass snake. DOWN: 1 Electricity bill; 2 and 5 Current expense; 3 Urns; 4 Assured; 7 Origami; 8 The Light Brigade; 9 Malingers; 14 Endangers; 18 Stumped; 19 Toddler; 20 Charges; 21 Cremona.

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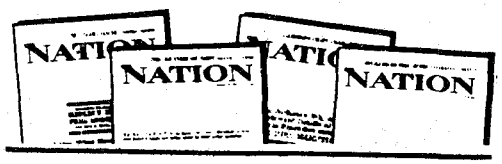

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• 1960 A NATION editorial described how the CIA, with the help of the Guatemalan government, was training Cuban exiles for an invasion of their former country. Despite our warnings to all the major news media, no one believed us. NATION readers were not surprised when the Bay of Pigs fiasco was announced.

• 1961 A special issue of The NATION was devoted to "Juggernaut: The Warfare State" by that ace investigative reporter, Fred J. Cook. It warned of the growing military-industrial complex. Many thought we were unpatriotic, paranoid. A decade later, the war in Southeast Asia and the Pentagon Papers proved otherwise. And in that same year, Fred J. Cook filled another special issue of The NATION . . . this time with a probe called "The CIA." He revealed facts that are only coming to light today. A seething nation now demands investigation. NATION readers knew about the CIA all along.

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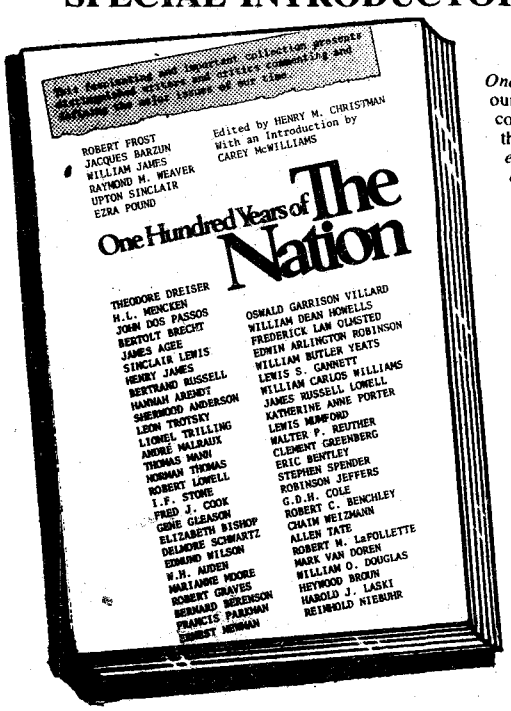

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